

D I A Z  
MASTER OF MEXICO

JAMES CREELMAN

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*F. L. Clarke, Photo., Mexico City.*

PRESIDENT PORFIRIO DIAZ IN HIS EIGHTIETH YEAR.

# D I A Z

## MASTER OF MEXICO

BY  
JAMES CREELMAN



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## P R E F A C E

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THE thrilling story of Porfirio Diaz has been told many times, yet always detached from Mexican history as a whole. The result has been highly confusing, usually misleading; and one has turned away from the tale feeling that modern Mexico has not been explained. In the raw attempt to apply the perfected institutions of Anglo-Saxon civilization to the descendants of the dusky races which inhabited Mexico before the discovery of America by Columbus, the Mexican statesmen of 1824 put the principles of democratic government to a terrible ordeal. Without keeping this experiment in mind, it is quite impossible to realize the profound significance of Diaz's extraordinary career and the importance of his work to all students of statecraft. He was summoned to power from a youth of poverty and obscurity by the necessities of his divided and demoralized country; and he is as truly a creation of the weakness of his people as the peaceful and progressive Mexico of to-day is largely the product of his strength and common sense. In these times of radical agitation, when sentimental democracy screams its epigrams against the hard, rough, slow work that confronts organized society in all countries, there is much to be learned in the life of this greatest Latin-American leader, from his brilliant, fighting youth to his white old

## PREFACE

age, in which he sits the acknowledged master of progress and comparative plenty.

The author has had the advantage of many extended conversations with President Diaz and the other leading men of the Mexican republic. Much has been drawn from the President's private memoirs. Many books and records have been searched and many parts of Mexico visited. All financial statements are to be understood as in Mexican currency.

The object of this work is neither to attack nor to defend, but to explain, the most interesting man of the most misunderstood and misrepresented country in the world.

J. C.

NEW YORK, 1910.

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# DIAZ

## MASTER OF MEXICO

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### CHAPTER I

#### THE QUICK AND THE DEAD

UNCOVERING his soldierly white head, President Diaz approached the tomb of Benito Juarez in the strange little graveyard-pantheon of San Fernando.

In his eightieth year the master and hero of modern Mexico—protagonist of the American hemisphere and inscrutable mystery to students of government—stood with all the grace and strength of an old warrior as he looked into the sculptured face of the immortal Indian lawyer-statesman, under whose leadership in the far valley of Oaxaca he had turned his boyish soul away from priestly ambitions and drawn a sword that was not sheathed until the Mexican republic rose at last from its long night of shame, confusion, weakness, and misery to take a place among the honored and trusted nations of the world.

In spite of his years, Porfirio Diaz seemed the incarnation of power and courage.

All about him were the graves and monuments of Mexican leaders—General Guerrero, a soldier of the first struggle for independence, afterwards President, and betrayed to a bloody death by treachery; Ignacio

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Comonfort, also President, murdered in cold blood by Mexican traitors; General Zaragoza, who drove back the French invaders on the unforgettable Fifth of May; General Arteaga, slain in cold blood by Maximilian's orders; Generals Miramon and Mejia, executed with Maximilian, when the fall of the Austrian invader's be-spangled empire marked the last interference of armed Europe with the republics of America.

The victorious survivor of a half century of wars and treacheries almost unparalleled in human history—with imaginative democracy, monarchy, and ecclesiastical power in a death grapple—the strength and common sense of Diaz had given more than thirty years of peace to his country.

From the faded pink and brown walls of the church of San Fernando, hard by, came a sound of solemn Sabbath chanting, and the sudden clamor of bells above the ancient altars of the Mexican capital echoed harshly among the gray memorials where the maker of a nation communed with its dead past.

His high, wide forehead sloped up to stiff, white hair, and jutted over deep-set, dark, soul-searching eyes—soft eyes, quick, sidewise-darting eyes; formidable, fierce eyes; friendly, confiding, humorous eyes—and the strong, broad nose, whose sensitive nostrils dilated with every emotion, went well with the tremendous crunch of the wide, powerful jaws, sweeping from large, flat ears, lying close to the head; the massive, square chin, the large, expressive mouth, swept by a crisp, snowy mustache; the pointed, fighting head, the short, muscular neck, the wide shoulders and deep chest.

There was a magnetic something in the eyes, a tense erectness and dignity in the slender figure, a nervous challenge in the lift of the head, that suggested a virility

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and tenacity that could defy the strains and shocks of a lifetime of adventures, perils, and temptations.

With a gesture of reverence the venerable leader laid a garland of fresh violets on the marble figure stretched tragically among dusty wreaths and faded ribbons. At that moment the bugles and drums of distant soldiery answered the wild tumult of bells, as though the tribute of Diaz living to Juarez dead had for a moment summoned from the past the struggle between Church and State that for more than fifty years desolated Mexico and reddened its soil with blood. Then the sounds died down and all was quiet in the small national cemetery where patriot and traitor, soldier and statesman, republican and imperialist, lay together in the earth, indifferent alike to wars, stratagems, or treasons.

There was a time when even Diaz and Juarez were at war. Between the deeds of the one and the theories of the other lay the whole length and breadth of the problem of civilized government. For when Mexico threw herself shouting into Anglo-Saxon forms of democracy, she challenged her own history and traditions, ignored the instincts of the blood running in her veins, forgot the wrecked temples and palaces and the extinguished civilization of her prehistoric peoples—turning in a day of heroic emotion to institutions possible only to nations of the highest political capacity—and those who had suffered together in the name of the long-oppressed republic drifted into war again, unconscious, perhaps, that the real question at issue was whether a political principle or a political method, true or possible in one place, is true or possible in all places, or if race or climate or time, or all three together, must determine whether a nation should be temporarily or permanently

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ruled from the bottom upward or from the top downward.

It was the patient loyalty of Juarez, "the man in the black coat," to abstract ideals of democracy, that inspired Victor Hugo, the master romancist, to address to the Indian President his famous greeting after the fall of Maximilian's empire in 1867:

"America has two heroes, Lincoln and thee; Lincoln, by whom slavery has died, and thee, by whom liberty has lived. Mexico has been saved by a principle, by a man. Thou art that man!"

Yet, above all things Benito Juarez was a lawyer. He had vision without executive strength. He was more interested in theories of government than in government itself. Although his pen gave the deathblow to ecclesiastical tyranny and he courageously shed the blood of imperial Maximilian, giving to the world a rare example of modest dignity, forbearance, and loyalty to principle, neither his purity of purpose nor his understanding of philosophical and governmental theories could bring peace and prosperity to a people speaking fifty-six tongues, degraded and impoverished by centuries of misgovernment, a country swept again and again by civil wars and invasions—a confused nation, with an empty treasury, without credit at home or abroad, swarming with armed bandits, wasted and tormented by successive insurrections.

Peace and honor to the ashes of the incorruptible patriot in whom the unmixed blood of aboriginal America found its supreme vindication! His place in history is safe.

But to his successor, Porfirio Diaz, fell the task of bringing peace, order, strength, credit, and progress to

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Mexico. In him is blended the blood of the primitive Mixtecs with that of the invading Spaniards. For thirty years he has ruled his country. At times his government has been harsh, but it has been actual government.

When the great Juarez died, the Mexicans were poor, divided, and prostrate. From the leaders at the capital the cry of triumphant democracy had gone forth to a people almost without commerce or industry and ready to spring at each other's throats again. The police were a jest. The courts were corrupt. There were no banks to take the place of the all-powerful and money-lending Church, now stripped of its wealth. Kidnaping was common, even in the streets of the capital. Highway robbers held all the roads, mingling oaths with a stilted rights-of-man jargon. Mexican national securities were selling in London at ten cents on the dollar. Mexican credit at home and abroad was a subject of laughter.

It was not until Porfirio Diaz became the master of Mexico, and the power, intelligence, and practical justice of his leadership marched irresistibly through the merely beautiful abstractions of imaginative democracy to an actual and unbroken peace, that the people of Mexico ceased to be a chaos of political and religious contentions and became a nation.)

Not that liberty perished. Not that the democratic Constitution ceased to be held up as the unchanged and unchangeable abstract ideal of political and social justice. But tranquillity, unity, and order being the foundations of civilization, upon which all prosperity, development, and credit must rest, President Diaz set his face against war in a country wholly given up to war, and by the very might of his character the hero of fifty battles turned from a soldier into a statesman, leading his country into habits of industry, establishing the national

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credit in all lands, drawing hundreds of millions of dollars of foreign capital into the republic, until its states are traversed by thousands of miles of railways and united by telegraphs, with vast systems of manufactures supplementing the rapidly growing riches of mining and agriculture, all served by splendid new seaports and other public works; so that, with constantly multiplying schools and colleges fertilizing the national intelligence, with a full treasury, with a generation of unbroken peace, with Mexican bonds selling in the markets of the world at a higher price than those of ancient European nations, with the word of Mexico good in all countries—there is little cause for wonder that, whether Porfirio Diaz has governed his country according to the theory of Anglo-Saxon countries or according to the capacities and necessities of the mass of his countrymen, it is the verdict of the world that he alone has known how to turn a mob into a people conscious of nationality, and that, all institutional theories aside, he must be ranked among the nation-makers of history.

The opinion of responsible men everywhere was summed up by President Roosevelt when he wrote from the White House on March 7, 1908:

“President Diaz is the greatest statesman now living, and he has done for his country what no other living man has done for any other country—which is the supreme test of the value of statesmanship.”

The most astonishing thing about this foremost man of the modern Americas is that his serene, peaceful, and unerring work as a statesman and ruler contrasts so dramatically with an earlier career of almost continuous fighting, with such romantic adventures, hand-to-hand struggles, hairbreadth escapes, imprisonments, flights,



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victories, and defeats, that his youth seems almost legendary. One phase of character that persists all through the story of his life is uncorruptibility and consistency of purpose.

President Diaz is not an Anglo-Saxon. He admires Anglo-Saxon institutions. [He believes that democracy is the only just principle of government.] He knows that democracy in all its parts is possible only to people who have [natural self-restraint and an abstract respect for law. His success in bringing his country out of confusion, strife, poverty and ignominy has given him an influence among Mexicans so great that for thirty years, [in spite of democratic theories, he has governed Mexico with the power of an autocrat.] Nor has he ever shown the slightest desire to insure a continuance of his power by modifying the written form of the republic. His life has been a bridge over which he hopes his people may walk into a more perfect civil liberty. But he has learned to draw a distinction between the truths that lead to anarchy and the methods that produce peace, prosperity, and, ultimately, concord. And, however much he may believe in the future possibilities of the gentle and likeable races who have developed so many capable men in the professions, and who have shown so much bravery in fighting for national independence, he has seen in the history of his country abundant evidence that the hard individual responsibilities of citizenship, which go with absolute democratic government, cannot be assumed in their entirety by the whole Mexican people until education and established habits of industry have prepared the way.

It is not fair to attempt a raw contrast between the work of Juarez and the achievements of Diaz. Juarez served a great purpose greatly. He kept alive a prin-

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ciple. But Diaz created a nation. There was in Diaz the practical wisdom of Marcellus, the grammarian, when he said to Tiberius, "Cæsar, thou canst give the Roman citizenship to men, but not to words."

Seldom in history do we find the absolute idealist a successful ruler. His tendency is to soften or ignore facts when they conflict with theories. His most effective function is to inspire the spirit of government, to search out and make clear the just ends of government, and to promote a cheerful, intelligent, loyal, and general acceptance of the necessary burdens of government, rather than to direct the methods of government.

Washington solemnly declared that his confidence in the Constitution of the United States lay in the admirable spirit of compromise in which it was conceived. And if the wisest and best-poised statesman of his age could say that of the great organic law in which the unconquerable aspirations and capacities of the Anglo-Saxon race burst into blossom, what must philosophy—statelier name for common sense—say of the varying shifts and compromises which inevitably lie between the noble democratic formulas borrowed from Anglo-Saxons by imaginative Mexican patriots, and the peace, prosperity and ultimate individual liberty which are the supreme objects of the republic, a vast majority of whose citizens can neither read nor write, are individually indifferent to political institutions, and apparently descended from many Oriental, probably Asiatic, bloods?

There is no more heroic, no more picturesque, no more commanding and appealing figure in the world than Porfirio Diaz, in whose veins leaps the tide-rip of two races and two civilizations; nor does modern history present a more wonderful and bewildering problem than



*F. L. Clarke, Photo., Mexico City.*

PRESIDENT DIAZ LAYING A WREATH ON THE TOMB OF JUAREZ.



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Mexico, the mystery of whose remote past, unreadable in prehistoric palaces and temples, makes her future all the more searchless.

In the name of religion, the Spanish priests who went to Mexico under the protection of Hernan Cortes and his steel-clad *conquistadores* extinguished an entire civilization reaching back, perhaps, thousands of years, by a systematic, pitiless, and complete destruction of its records.

The long and bloody struggle which drove the Spanish flag from Mexico was followed by a savage and, at times, almost barbarous conflict between the republican forces and ecclesiastical authority, which stripped the arrogant and licentious monastic orders of their civic powers, sheared the Church of its enormous properties, abolished its exclusive privileges, and politically disfranchised its priesthood, leaving the government of the triumphant republic to an experimental democratic statesmanship seeking to express an unlimited imagination in the terms of a provincial experience.

Then the country was mangled by invaders and an imperial Mexican throne was invented for the Austrian Archduke Maximilian by Napoleon III, the weak and treacherous monarch whose gambler's dream of opening up a career for the Latin race on the American continent not only included the destruction of the Mexican republic but apparently also the ultimate conquest of the great Anglo-Saxon democracy under whose shelter all other American republics remained secure against the ambitions of armed European monarchy.

There were days when the independence of Mexico, if not the future of the American hemisphere, seemed to hang upon Porfirio Diaz. If he had failed to climb in the darkness down the rope that swung from the roof

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of his convent prison in Puebla; if he had accepted the imperial bribe of Maximilian and turned his sword against the republic; if he had lost the decisive battle of Puebla, which made possible the siege of the capital and left Maximilian helpless in Querétaro; if he had thought of himself rather than his cause and weakened, lost heart, or blundered in any of the crises which hinged upon his courage, patriotism, and power—Napoleon III might have intrenched himself upon the ruins of Mexican liberty and at least attempted the armed conquest of democracy in the new world. When Maximilian and his invaders had driven a wedge of bayonets across the heart of Mexico; when President Juarez was driven northward until his fugitive government had to take asylum in a village beside the distant American frontier—in that time of weakness and despair it was the young soldier, Diaz, who kept the spirit of resistance alive, who gathered about him the poor and despised Indians, thrilled them by his appeals to their patriotism, taught them how to fight, and, cut off from communication with Juarez or his ministers, created and equipped a native army and led it irresistibly through a wilderness of volcanic mountains and parched valleys against veteran white troops under famous European officers, outwitting Napoleon's experienced commanders, smashing the imperial lines with his ragged Indian volunteers, and driving the enemy back steadily until the last great victory was won and President Juarez passed again into the Mexican capital through the ranks of Diaz's troops, to raise over the national palace the flag of the republic which his faithful general placed in his hands.

But what Diaz accomplished as a soldier, his marvelous, almost incredible adventures, and his resistance to temptation, are less important, although they may

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more deeply stir the average imagination, than the peaceful thirty years of his work as President of the republic. It is that long stretch of strong, wise, upbuilding regenerating statesmanship that lifts him in his old age to such a height of distinction that he is known in all lands and that his name is accepted everywhere as a guaranty for his country.

It was Juarez who said, "Respect for the rights of others is peace." These wise words are chiseled on most of the monuments erected to the memory of the Indian lawyer. But respect for the rights of others is not a natural instinct in all races. It is the prevailing habit in some races; in others it seems scarcely to exist at all. Without it true democracy is impossible. In almost exact proportion as the citizens of a country respect each other's rights the government becomes an automatic agency of the popular will. There can be no sounder statement than that a free nation is not a mechanism, but an organism in which every cell is conscious; and it follows that until prolonged peace, education, and industry completely develop the intelligence and absorb the energies of the mass of the Mexican people the guiding idea of Mexico should be found in President Diaz's abrupt but practical motto, "Less politics and more administration."

## CHAPTER II

### OPPRESSED MEXICO TRIES ANGLO-SAXON INSTITUTIONS

To understand how Diaz made a peaceful and prosperous nation out of the Mexican people it is well to defer the story of his picturesque and thrillingly adventurous youth and know something of the heterogeneous human elements that were poured, crushed but unmelted and unassimilated, into the uncongenial mold of democracy by an earlier patriotism innocent or forgetful of the fact that self-government after the fashion of Anglo-Saxon peoples is an inheritance as well as an achievement.

Not only are fifty-five native tongues spoken to-day in the republic, but there are still standing the ruins of thousands of palaces, temples, and forts whose histories were already forgotten when the discovery of America was followed by the Spanish conquest of Mexico.

In the peninsula of Yucatan alone these often majestic and richly carved ruins, built by the primitive Mayas, include more than ten thousand, and, possibly, a hundred thousand, hewn-stone structures, most of them representing architecture of singular and noble beauty. Many of the temples, palaces, and forts are buildings of immense size and massiveness. Some are set on the top of lofty truncated pyramids. These mighty ruins, chiseled before metal tools were known in America—at least no trace has ever been found of any but hard stone



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instruments—stretch over hundreds of miles of almost desolate country. They were but the public structures of a people whose dwelling huts turned to dust in the prehistoric age. It is estimated that the ancient population of the Yucatan peninsula alone may have been 20,000,000 persons. To-day it is less than 400,000, including Campeche and Quintana Roo.

This peninsula is only a fourteenth part of the territory of the Mexican republic, which has an area of 767,259 square miles and is as large as the combined soils of France, Austro-Hungary, England, Ireland, Scotland, Italy, Holland, Portugal, and Belgium. Yet the evidence of an antique and highly developed civilization among the Mayas is so vast as to strike the beholder into awe. For strength as well as imaginative richness these memorials of vanished American culture challenge the stateliest ruins of Egypt, China, or India. The wrecked grandeur of Chichen-Itza and Uxmal is more tragically mysterious than Delhi or Luxor. It is difficult to understand why this wonderful country has not drawn the American traveling public in multitudes to its thrilling scenes of vanished civilization.

There can be no doubt that the Mayas are Orientals. Their faces, heads, and bodies, their manners, habits, and ways of thinking, alternately suggest, like their wonderful ruins, China, Corea, India, Japan, Java, and the Malay peninsula.

The matchless ruins of Mitla, standing in mute loveliness in the lonely Oaxaca valley, suggest in their dim frescoes, monoliths, and mosaic walls of cut stone memories of the architects of the Nile valley. The prehistoric sculptures of Palenque, in Chiapas; the monstrous pyramid of Cholula, in the wide Puebla valley, where Cortes and his armed men saw a city with 400 temple towers

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and promptly slew 6,000 of its inhabitants; the immense pyramids of San Juan Teotihuacan, near Mexico City, with their buried treasures of carved green jade, obsidian knives, masks, terra-cotta heads, and other primitive objects, bearing designs irresistibly suggestive of early Egypt—from mountainous Sonora, in the northwest, down through 2,000 miles to the very frontiers of Guatemala, the astounding remains of civilization left by the Mayas, Zapotecs, Toltecs, Otomies, Chichimecs, Totonacs, Tlaxcalans, and other peoples who built cities, with temples and palaces, and had organized governments and religions many centuries before the discovery of America by Europe, all bear witness to the fact that the present Indian population of Mexico is descended from races and civilizations that came from across the seas.

The tremendous importance of this lies in the fact that probably eighty per cent of the present native inhabitants of Mexico are Indians or part Indians. There are varying theories of the relative proportions of white and Indian blood in the country, but no reliable figures. President Diaz's own estimate gives about twenty per cent of pure white blood to Mexico. Archæologists who have spent their lives studying the ancient ruins; ethnologists who have analyzed the mental, moral, and physical traits of the living populations; statesmen and scholars who have searched out and compared their political tendencies and capacities; and religious leaders who have tested their spiritual understandings and inclinations—all these admit that the precise origin of the Mexican Indians and the manner of their journey to America are mysteries which only dreamers or charlatans pretend to solve. But practically all authorities agree that these Indians are the descendants of Orientals

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who built the majestic ruins which are at once the wonder and despair of archæology—the greatest and most fascinating mystery of human history.

There is much, very much, to indicate that a large part of the elder Mexicans came from Asia. Thousands upon thousands of green jade objects have been dug out of ruins so old that even when the Spaniards forced their way into the country the natives had no traditions about them. Little Mongolian masks of jade, death masks of marvelously carved Asiatic faces—not barbaric inventions, but obvious and appealing portraits, worked out with almost Greek nicety—have been found in the valley of Oaxaca, not far from the Mitla ruins.

Not an atom of this jade has ever been found in a state of nature anywhere on the American hemisphere, although it has furnished ornaments for the peoples of China and other Asiatic countries for thousands of years. For three quarters of a century archæologists and mineralogists have searched the mountains and valleys of Mexico in vain for jade deposits. Yet the presence of jade masks, idols, animals, beads, and other ornaments in the most sacred palaces and temples of ancient Mexico shows that the stone was as greatly prized by the primitive Americans as by Asiatics. How did the jade come to be in Mexico before Columbus crossed the Atlantic if it did not come from the Far East?

It matters little how these races got to America; by means of a continent, or of islands now sunk in the ocean, or whether they crossed into Alaska, or were the descendants of successive groups whose ships were blown by storms over the ocean—that, at least, has happened in the time of recorded history. The thing that seems to be almost indisputable is that the masses of the Mexican nation are racially Orientals, that their blood derives

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from the Egyptians or Indians, or Mongols or Malays, or Coreans or Japanese—or is a mixture of all or a part of these peoples. The stupendous architecture left on Mexican soil by their remote ancestors has too many close resemblances to Oriental art to be merely accidental. Besides, there are no crude, barbarian beginnings from which the architecture of ancient Mexico grew. The vanished builders whose works astonish and thrill the traveler of to-day must have already possessed a highly developed knowledge of architecture when they reached America.

There are those who hold that all the ancient civilizations of America, from Peru to Mexico, are the result of Mongol conquests; that, after the defeat of a vast Mongolian army sent in ships by Kublai Khan to conquer Japan in the year 1284, a part of the beaten forces found their way across the Pacific Ocean, seized Peru, established the Inca dynasties, and created a new civilization; that the wonderful Toltecs, who preceded the Aztecs in Mexico, were, in the sixth century, compelled to flee from their homes in Mongolia, near Lake Baikal, to escape the mounted hordes of the pitiless Turkish Grand Khan which swept across Asia, the fugitives having no other chance for life than a desperate voyage over the seas in search of new land; and that the Aztecs and the six tribes which accompanied them to America were the seven Mongol tribes which emigrated after one of the bloodiest battles in history, which took place in the year 1179.

While this explanation of the astounding ruins and puzzling races of Mexico is largely theoretical, there is much to support it in what is known of the laws, customs, ceremonials, and monuments of the prehistoric American civilizations. But, whatever the truth of this

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may be, one finds enough to explain the Mexico of to-day in the practical certainty that the brown-skinned and yellow-skinned races, and their hybrids, which make up at least three quarters of the republic's population, descend from Oriental bloods, to which truly democratic political institutions are alien if not impossible.

These people were cannibals when the Spaniards found them. They sacrificed human beings to their gods everywhere and the priests ate the limbs of the victims. It was a common thing for Mexican warriors to eat their prisoners. Throughout the country, in all the townships, there were cagelike jails, in which men, women, and children were carefully fattened, so that they might be more palatable and nourishing when killed. One has but to read the many histories of the conquest of Mexico to realize the appalling prevalence of human sacrifice and cannibalism among the long-settled and civilized peoples whose descendants, three hundred years afterwards, undertook the vast responsibilities of absolute democratic government, an experiment which even the most enlightened and politically developed nation in the world has not yet completely vindicated in practice.

The most daring of the early statesmen who established Anglo-Saxon civilization in America did not dream of intrusting their government to the suffrages of the aboriginal American tribes, nor did, Washington, Hamilton, or Jefferson suggest the enfranchisement of the Indians as a basis for free American institutions. Not that the fierce, barbarous nomads of the North are to be compared to the gentle and lovable descendants of ancient Mexican civilizations. But only a hundred years before the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock to prepare the way for the grandest and sincerest experiment in democratic government ever attempted by man,

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the Spanish conquerors found everywhere in Mexico altars dripping with human blood and temples whose walls were black with the stains of slaughter.

It was the same in all regions, a chain of theocratic monarchies or chieftainships—although the Tlaxcalans were ruled by an elected oligarchy—and the great Aztec empire, under Montezuma, practically supreme on the great central plateau, his capital in the midst of a flooded valley, 7,500 feet above sea level—wherever the Spaniards went they found before the many gods of the country human hearts freshly torn from living bodies and a vast priesthood feasting on the remains of the sacrifices; all that was not fed to wild beasts.

It may be that the shallow and ignorant few who attempt to compare the government of Mexico with the government of the United States, because their organic laws agree, can gain enlightenment by considering the fact that about six sevenths of the population of the United States belong to the pure white and developed European races, while more than three quarters of the citizens of Mexico are descendants, or part descendants, of the dusky peoples who lived in that country at the time of Cortes's invasion. It is not a subject for comparison, but for contrast. The wonder is that, after three hundred years of Spanish misgovernment and fifty years of savage civil wars, even the most devoted and skillful statesmanship should have made of Mexico a nation of peace and progress.

Those who criticise the policies by which President Diaz has saved his people from the demoralizing extremes of merely imaginative democracy, sternly pursuing the objects of democracy rather than worshiping its formulas, may well recall the description written by Bernal Diaz, one of the *conquistadores* who accompanied

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Cortes, of the mighty *teocali*, or temple, which the vanquished Aztec emperor showed to the Spanish leader. It helps to an understanding of the blanketed and barefooted masses whose forefathers produced the conditions and ideals represented by the rule of Montezuma and his kind less than four hundred years ago:

“On each of these basements stood a gigantic, fat-looking figure, of which the one on the right hand represented the god of war, Huitzilopochtli. This idol had a very broad face, with distorted and furious-looking eyes, and was covered all over with jewels, gold, and pearls. Large serpents, likewise, covered with gold and precious stones, wound round the body of this monster, which held in one hand a bow, and in the other a bunch of arrows. Around Huitzilopochtli’s neck were figures representing human faces and hearts made of gold and silver and decorated with blue stones. In front of him stood several perfuming pans with copal, the incense of the country; also the hearts of three Indians, who had that day been slaughtered, were now consuming before him as a burnt offering. Every wall of this chapel and the whole floor had become almost black with human blood, and the stench was abominable.

“On the left hand stood another figure of the same size as Huitzilopochtli. Its face was very much like that of a bear; its shining eyes were made of tetzcat, the looking-glass of the country. This idol, like its brother Huitzilopochtli, was completely covered with precious stones, and was called Tetzcatlipuca. This was the god of hell, and the souls of the dead Mexicans stood under him. A circle of figures wound round its body, resembling diminutive devils with serpents’ tails. The walls and floor around this idol were also besmeared with blood, and the stench was worse than in a Spanish slaughter house. Five human hearts had that day been sacrificed to him. On the very top of this temple stood another chapel            also another idol, half man and half

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lizard, completely covered with precious stones. . . I have, however, forgotten its name, but not that here, also, everything was besmeared with blood, and the stench so offensive that we could not have stayed there much longer. . . This platform was altogether covered with a variety of hellish objects—large and small trumpets, huge slaughtering knives, and burnt hearts of Indians who had been sacrificed: everything clotted with coagulated blood, cursed to the sight and creating horror in the mind. .

“There also stood near this same door other figures resembling devils and serpents, and not far from this an altar encrusted with blood grown black, and some that had recently been spilt. In a building adjoining this we perceived a quantity of dishes and basins of various shapes. These were filled with water and served to cook the flesh of the unfortunate beings who had been sacrificed, which flesh was eaten by the priests. Near to the altar were lying several daggers, and wooden blocks similar to those used by our butchers for hacking meat on. . .

“Next to this temple was another in which human skulls and bones were piled up, though both apart; their number was endless. This place had also its appropriate idols, and in all these temples we found priests clad in long black mantles, with hoods shaped like those worn by the Dominican friars and choristers; their ears were pierced and the hair of their head was long and stuck together with coagulated blood.”

This scene of human sacrifice and cannibalism, presided over by the imperial Montezuma, was within a few feet of the spot on which Porfirio Diaz has for thirty years wrought peace, strength, and progress into a nation now honored and trusted everywhere among civilized men. It was in that very year that Luther was tried at Worms before Charles V, whose helmeted and cuirassed adventurers were throwing down the altars,



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smashing the idols, and burning the archives and literature of ancient Mexico.

In the year 1493, a few months after the discovery of America by Columbus, all the undiscovered regions of the earth were divided by Pope Alexander VI between Spain and Portugal. The kings of these two countries had quarreled over the new lands across the Atlantic and had appealed to the Holy See to settle their claims. The Pope drew a line on the map from north to south, a hundred leagues west of the Azores, and—that being a time when it meant death to deny that the earth was flat, with people on one side of it only—issued a bull declaring that all lands discovered east of this line should belong to the Portuguese, while all to the west of it should belong to the Spaniards.

It was an age when intense religious feeling was mixed up with a general craze for adventure and military glory. Ever since the Crusades all European exploring expeditions had gone forth in the name of religion. The Pope was the “father of kings” and he alone could give a Christian nation title to new countries. So the splendid adventurers of Spain drew their swords in the name of Christ and the Church, however greed for gold and glory might impel them.

In that spirit Hernan Cortes, who conquered Mexico for Spain, was sent out with an armed expedition in February, 1519, by Diego de Velazquez, Captain General of Cuba, to spread Christianity among the inhabitants of the American mainland, which had previously been touched by his nephew, Juan de Grijalva, who brought back rumors of marvelous treasures possessed by the idol-worshipping heathen.

When Cortes was named as captain of this never-to-be-forgotten adventure he bought at a cost of thousands

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of dollars a magnificent state robe with a heavy gold train and provided a black velvet banner embroidered in gold with the royal arms of Spain above a scarlet cross surrounded by blue and white flames, and bearing the words in Latin, "Friends, let us follow the cross, and under this sign, if we have faith, we shall conquer." Then to the sound of drums and trumpets, he announced that all who joined him in the conquest should have a share in the lands, gold, silver, and jewels they might win in the new countries. He raised a force of between five and six hundred fighting men in armor, including musketeers and crossbowmen, sixteen horses, and some artillery.

There is scarcely anything in history comparable to the story of the bloody conquest of Mexico by Cortes. When he reached the site of the present city of Vera Cruz he resigned the commission of Velazquez and had his followers elect him captain general and chief justice; thereafter, having first destroyed his ships, he advanced upon Montezuma's empire, sword in hand and with the name of Christ and of the Church ever upon his lips. The flash and thunder of his cannon, the sight of his horses—animals never before seen by the natives—the fearful fighting power of his men, the grandeur of his pretensions, convinced many of the superstitious inhabitants that Cortes had appeared among them in fulfillment of an ancient prophecy made by a white god-man, Quetzalcohuatl, who had once ruled over them. Montezuma sent ambassadors to him, who presented gold and silver plates as large as wagon wheels, a casque filled with pure grains of gold; thirty gold ducks; gold wrought into forms of lions, tigers, dogs, and apes; ten gold chains with lockets; a gold bow and twelve gold arrows; and all manner of marvelously worked ornaments and gar-

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ments; and, in the name of their sovereign, they begged the Spaniards not to approach him. Again and again did the Aztec emperor send processions of men loaded with presents to be laid at Cortes's feet. The haughty *conquistador* replied that he came in the name of the greatest monarch in the world and that his mission was to put an end to human sacrifice and the worship of idols and to make known the Christian religion.

He fought a great battle with the Tlaxcalans—Bernal Diaz insists that Cortes with 400 men defeated 50,000 of the enemy under Xicotencatl, the Tlaxcalan general in chief—and then persuaded the vanquished people to become his allies against Montezuma and his Aztecs. A few days later some of Cortes's men ascended the mighty dead volcano Popocatepetl and were lowered into the crater to get sulphur for their cannon powder. Then the *conquistadores* marched on to Cholula—nothing now remains of that splendid city of temples and towers but a grass-grown pyramid and a few almost formless ruins—where, on a rumor that the outwardly friendly Cholulans intended treachery, he gathered their nobles, priests, and warriors together and, at an agreed signal, he and his steel-clad soldiers massacred 6,000 of them.

Again and again Cortes overturned the idols and gory altars of the natives and in their places set up images of the Virgin; yet he sent word to Montezuma that he and his men were suffering from “a disease of the heart that is cured by gold.” And Montezuma, in the hope of inducing the invaders to depart from his country, continued to send embassies with gold, not realizing that he was inflaming a passion that meant his own destruction.

After the slaughter of the Cholulans, Montezuma, appareled in almost indescribable grandeur, the very

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soles of his boots being of solid gold, received Cortes in Tenochtitlan, the present City of Mexico. The Aztec monarch announced that he would no longer resist the will of the gods and would become a vassal of the great emperor represented by Cortes.

The Spaniards then persuaded Montezuma to abandon his palace and live in their quarters, and thereupon they made him a prisoner. The sight of their weak and amiable monarch in the hands of the invaders, the insults offered to their temples and gods by the Spaniards, and the massacre of a great multitude during a religious festival, caused the Aztecs to rise against their oppressors. And when Montezuma appealed to his people to respect the strangers, they showered him with missiles and killed him. The leadership then fell upon his nephew, the heroic Cuauhtemoc, who drove Cortes and his men out of the city. After a campaign of continuous fighting for many months Cortes conquered the capital. He took Cuauhtemoc, the last of the Aztec emperors, prisoner, roasted his feet over a fire in the hope of securing hidden treasures, and then ignominiously hanged him. The Mexican nation, under President Diaz, has erected a great monument to the noble Cuauhtemoc, and the name of Cortes is so execrated in the republic to-day that even the resting place of his ashes is not known.

The whole world knows the story of how the peoples of Mexico were trodden under the armed feet of Spain. Then followed the Christianization of the heathen by the Spanish monks. It is said that a single monk baptized 5,000 Mexicans in one day. In a few years more than 4,000,000 were baptized. The effect of this wholesale baptism of a people uninstructed in the essentials of Christianity was indicated by Alexander

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von Humboldt when he wrote that the introduction of the Christian religion into Mexico "had no other effect upon the Mexicans than to substitute new ceremonies and symbols for the rites of a sanguinary worship." "Dogma has not succeeded dogma; but only ceremony to ceremony," he declared. "I have seen them, marked and adorned with tinkling bells, perform savage dances around the altar while a monk of St. Francis elevated the Host."

It serves no necessary purpose here to repeat the story of Spanish domination over the helpless masses of America. It is enough to know that each colony, as soon as it was strong enough, rose against the Spaniards and drove them out, until to-day the Spanish flag flies nowhere in the Western hemisphere.

Spain extinguished the ancient civilization of the Mexicans and destroyed their literature and monuments, and in a great horror of darkness the subjugated Indians—a population of possibly 30,000,000, with many fine cities—sank under the rule of their conquerors. It is true that they were accustomed to human sacrifice, cannibalism, and slavery; but at least their government was their own. Now they were ruled by foreigners bent upon ravishing the country of its wealth.

In the long stretch of government represented by 170 Spanish viceroys and 610 captains general and governors, practically all Mexicans were shut out of the government. Yet in that time more than \$10,000,000,000 worth of gold, silver, and other metals was carried to Spain from Mexican mines, the King's share, one fifth, averaging about \$34,000,000 a year for practically three centuries, to say nothing of the immense mineral wealth smuggled into Spain without record.

No wonder that a Spanish muleteer in Mexico who

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became rich enough to lend the King a million pesos was then created Count de Regla; that when his son was christened "the whole party walked from his home to the church upon ingots of silver"; and that "the Count invited the King of Spain to visit his Mexican territories, assuring him that the hoofs of His Majesty's horse should touch nothing but solid silver from Vera Cruz to the capital."

Everything was sacrificed to the fierce Spanish search for silver and gold. Industry and agriculture were neglected. The Mexicans were practically serfs, and, under the Courts of Royal Audience established by the mighty Council of the Indies, all judges and court officers were native-born Spaniards, legally incapable of marrying or holding lands in the colonies. Mexicans were forbidden to hold office. Intercourse with foreigners was strictly prohibited. No Mexican pretended to know the laws imposed by the oppressors. The people had no part in the government, which was simply organized spoliation. All commerce between Mexico and the rest of the world, save Spain alone, was prohibited. Nothing could be imported in any but Spanish ships. The Mexicans were not allowed to produce anything which might be bought from Spain, in order that the Spaniards might have a complete commercial monopoly. Wine-growing and silk culture were sternly repressed. The penalty for trading with foreign countries was death. Enormous taxes were laid upon foods and other necessities of the masses. Innumerable *fueros*, or legal privileges, set up galling and degrading distinctions between Spaniards and natives. Neither soldiers nor ecclesiastics were subject to the civil courts. The whole machinery of the government, political, judicial, and administrative, was in the hands of foreigners

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for about three hundred years, and even the sacraments and other religious offices, so dear to the souls of a naturally theocratic people, yielded an immense revenue to the Spanish crown.

In spite of many apparently admirable qualities in the Laws of the Indies, the truth is that the Mexicans were ruled as a conquered people, and the iron policy of Spain was voiced in the latter part of the eighteenth century by one of the Spanish viceroys, the Marquis de Croix, who uttered the following in a proclamation :

“Let the people of these dominions learn once for all that they were born to be silent and to obey, and not to discuss nor to have opinions in political affairs.”

There was peace in Mexico, but it was the peace of slavery. Magnificent cathedrals and churches and vast convents were built, and the Church, more resplendent and powerful here than elsewhere in the world, acquired a monstrous wealth. It owned estates as large as principalities. Its tithes brought in an imperial revenue. Its gorgeous altars and its overflowing treasuries were the wonder of all travelers. It had perhaps \$200,000,000 to lend. It was the one supreme money-lender, for there were no banks. Its title deeds and its mortgages covered something like a third of the whole property of Mexico. The dread Inquisition added a grander emphasis to the true faith by burning heretics, and while the aboriginals were virtually exempt from this process of salvation, they were terrified into an even more unreasoning submission.

The bewildered Indians of Mexico seemed to lose all power of resistance, all initiative, all hope. Yet they were the great body of the people. They bowed to the yoke of Spain in a sort of gentle despair. They knelt

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before Christian altars, but the root of Christianity was not in them nor their surroundings; they were still pagans uttering idolatry in a new dialect. The power of the government, the jeweled grandeur of the Spanish Church, smote their imaginations flat. They had no background, for the Spaniards had burned all records of their history. They seemed to have no future, for their conquerors were growing richer, while they themselves could not grow any poorer; yet as the generations passed, their bodies dwindled, and before the end of the period of Spanish domination the probably 30,000,000 of Indians had shrunk to something like 6,000,000.

But while the Virgin of Remedios, the sacred image carried to Mexico by Cortes and his *conquistadores*, had "three petticoats: one embroidered with pearls, another with emeralds, and a third with diamonds, the value of which is said to be not less than three millions of dollars"—if this represented the approach to God through the Spanish Church, there was the Virgin of Guadalupe who had appeared to Juan Diego, the poor, unlettered Indian, on a little hill near the capital in 1531, and there, in a jeweled altar, hung his blanket with the Virgin's image miraculously imprinted upon it, in a church that even Zumarraga, the great Archbishop of Mexico, who made a public bonfire of all the Aztec literature he could find, erected on the hill of Guadalupe in acknowledgment that Heaven had revealed itself even to a penniless Mexican Indian without the intervention of a Spanish priest.

When Napoleon placed his brother on the throne of Spain and the Spaniards revolted against the new monarch, there was a general feeling in Mexico that the sovereignty of the colony had reverted to its own people and, thrilling with the political influences radiated from



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the American and French revolutions, the Mexican people proclaimed a war of independence in 1810 under the leadership of the white-haired, stoop-shouldered, scholarly priest Hidalgo, who, when he found that the plan to rise against the government was discovered, rang the bell of his parish church in the night, gathered his people about him, proclaimed the independence of his country, and with a patriotic rabble, many armed with pitchforks, began the war for liberty, marching at the head of the insurgents with a banner bearing the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Under the leadership of President Diaz the Mexican nation has grandly celebrated the centennial anniversary of that event.

Hidalgo captured the city of Celaya and then the rich mining town of Guanajuato, where his army increased to 20,000 men. The insurgents also took Valladolid and scattered an army of 3,000 men, with artillery, at Monte de las Cruces, near the capital. But, alas! the noble warrior-priest was defeated at the bridge of Calderon and was afterwards captured and pitilessly executed.

His death, however, did not end the Mexican struggle for independence. The war was pressed by patriots like Vincente Guerrero, Nicolas Bravo, and Jose Maria Morelos.

Morelos, the real successor of Hidalgo, was also a priest. No purer patriot, no braver soldier ever lived. He led the untrained, half-starved, and ignorant Indians with a skill and intelligence that won the admiration of even the great Wellington himself. Morelos also was captured, tried before the Inquisition, and shot in 1815 by order of a court martial.

Mexico began her career as an independent nation in 1821 when Agustin de Iturbide, the Mexican-born

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commander of the royal troops operating against Guerrero and his Mexican insurgents, suddenly joined the enemy and proclaimed the independence of the country. A year later Iturbide had himself crowned Emperor of the Mexican Empire in the Cathedral of Mexico. A few months later General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, one of the most amazing figures in Mexican history, headed a revolution against the Emperor. Guerrero and Bravo also took up arms against him. No "Serene Highness" could reign over a people who could face the veteran troops of Spain. He had become leader of the revolution against Spain under a programme which included the "three guarantees"—symbolized by the white, red, and green of the Mexican flag—the maintenance of the Roman Catholic Church, the independence of Mexico as a limited monarchy under a Spanish prince, and the union of Spaniards and Mexicans. Instead of this he had set up a preposterous empire, had imprisoned members of Congress who opposed his bombastic pretensions, had established himself in a magnificent palace, and had founded an order of nobility, to say nothing of a salary of \$125,000 a year which he paid to himself.

Three months after Santa Anna drew his sword in Jalapa, Iturbide resigned his crown and went to Europe. Congress afterwards declared him to be a traitor, and on his return to his country in disguise in 1824 he was arrested and shot.

The one supreme, sleepless idea of the Mexican nation was to adopt a policy and a form as different from the Spanish Government as possible. The society which now found itself free from foreign rule was a veritable Niagara of bloods, of traditions, of ambitions, and of passions. It had nothing in common but historical con-

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sciousness. The patriot leaders were brave and devoted men, but they knew little about the science of government. Nor did they attempt to take into consideration the racial characteristics or political capacities of the millions of Mexican Indians before deciding upon a form of government suited to their necessities and abilities.

It never seemed to occur to them that a people who only three hundred years before were idol-worshipping pagans, without a thought or desire for individual liberty, reigned over by kings and priests, and kneeling everywhere before monstrous altars dripping with human blood, might not be able to maintain the higher programmes of democracy won through a thousand years of Anglo-Saxon aspirations.

The one thing was to be free and to trample under foot everything that savored of monarchy and Spain! So, in 1824, the Mexican Congress, in a great outburst of emotional statesmanship, declared Mexico to be a republic and adopted a Constitution modeled after the Constitution of the United States. This reaching out for civic salvation through the political creeds of sterner and steadier peoples was made possible just a year before by the historic declaration of the United States through President Monroe that neither the Holy Alliance nor all Europe together would be permitted to disturb the independence of new-born American nations.

## CHAPTER III

### BIRTH AND BOYHOOD OF DIAZ

WHEN Porfirio Diaz was born, in 1830, Mexico had been a republic for six years, Spain had made another vain and foolish attempt to reconquer the country, and two armed revolutions had already foreshadowed the prolonged and indescribable national tragedy of successive plots, uprisings, dictatorships, general lawlessness, brigandage, murder, bankruptcy, and civil war which utterly wrecked the weakened and demoralized victims of three hundred years of Spanish greed and tyranny.

The man who was to become a nation-maker and the most masterful and interesting figure of his age came into the world in a poor little inn in the old and picturesque city of Oaxaca, near the rough mountains where Benito Juarez was born.

Such an extraordinary character must be examined through ancestry as well as environment, for although circumstances and opportunity, combined with necessity or ambition, may account for much in a great leader of men, the mysterious forces of the will must have been latent in the blood from which they were summoned to action.

The thin, little, coatless boy in a donkey-skin cap who used to go from the poor home, where his mother and sisters slaved from dawn until far into the night, to gaze in almost speechless wonder at an image of the

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Virgin arrayed in \$2,000,000 worth of emeralds, rubies, pearls, and diamonds in a church across the street, afterwards showed in thirty years as a fighting soldier, and thirty-four years more as a peace-compelling constructive statesman, so much power, wisdom, and vision, that, as he emerged into unshakable command out of the chaos of Mexican history, the world began to consider the hereditary origin of such rare and heroic qualities.

The time came when that humble lad, grown to be a commander of troops, captured his native city from the forces of the armed church and seized the marvelous altar jewels that had dazzled his childish eyes; not to despoil a house of worship, but to compel a moderate ransom for the sake of his worn and hungry republican soldiers. It is the conscious purpose shining all through his life and the steady persistence of his effort, in the face of constant privation and peril, that lends such an interest to the fact that he is part Indian and part white man.

His father, José de la Cruz Diaz, was of full Spanish blood, and descended from an Andalusian immigrant of the sixteenth century, probably one of the original settlers of the city of Oaxaca. His mother was the child of Mariano Mori, of pure white Andalusian strain, who married Maria Tecla Cortes, an Indian girl of the Mixteco race, from the ancient fighting village of Yodocono, in the Oaxaca mountains, where her dusky mother owned good lands and herds. The Mixteco Indians, who are to-day a "run-down" people, living in a very small territory, have, nevertheless, legends of terrible days when they tore the heads from their enemies, the Zapotecs, and exhibited their mutilated bodies on the backs of donkeys. The arms of Oaxaca, the venerable

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Zapotec capital, bear the gory head of a beautiful Mixteco princess of old, which was cut from her body because she preferred to die rather than to reveal the secrets of her people.

So that Porfirio Diaz is one quarter Indian and three quarters white.

The father of the future master of Mexico was a short, thick-set, muscular man, clear-headed, alert, and of great endurance. As a young man he was a miner, and at the head of an armed escort he used to take donkey trains of silver into the city of Oaxaca from the reduction works owned by the cathedral chapter of Oaxaca in the Ixtlan district of the Zapotec mountains. He afterwards became a farmer and a farrier and was also something of a veterinary surgeon. The progenitor of Mexico's greatest soldier and statesman grew sugar cane for a while near the Pacific Coast. All the rent he had to pay was a few pounds of wax for candles to be burned on the feast day of the patron saint of the village which owned the land. He was a curious mixture of a man. He started a small store in a village, put up a sugar mill with his own hands, learned the trade of a tanner, and, having been a farrier for a regiment of cavalry, he had concealed General Guerrero in his house and the fugitive patriot had gratefully commissioned him as a captain. His wife always addressed him by that military title.

This deep-chested, adventurous, and resourceful man was a strange blending of two characters. In spite of his prodigious zeal for work and his hard-headed way of delving a living out of difficult situations, there was a strong mystic strain in him. He was an intense Catholic and was much given to praying. So deeply was he immersed in religion that he would often wear the brown

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habit, with its cowl and girdle, of the tertiary order of St. Francis, a privilege of laymen.

In the end he found sugar cultivation unprofitable and went to the city of Oaxaca, where he rented a one-story house and established an inn, known as the Mesón de la Soledad, with a horseshoeing shop, a veterinary hospital, and a stable. The inn was practically an eating place for teamsters and small shopkeepers.

Here, on September 15, 1830—or rather on September 14th, for his day of baptism has always been mistaken for his birthday—was born the child who was to revolutionize Mexico and become the modern hero of the Americas. Whereat his Spanish-Mixteco mother bowed her dusky face and straight black Indian hair for hours before the statue of the Virgin and the tapers twinkling about it in her bedroom, and the strong-limbed, heavy-shouldered father wore the Franciscan gown and girdle and prayed more fervently than ever, while many bronzed muleteers, in red blankets, mighty sombreros, and sandals, trooped into the queer old inn to see the new infant; and occasionally a monk stopped at the door to make inquiries, for the man-child's godfather was the priest José Agustin Dominguez, yet to be a bishop.

When young Porfirio was three years old his father died of cholera, and the poor little mother with her youngest son, Felix, still at the breast, and three growing daughters to support, heroically maintained the inn for four years more and then gave up the struggle, going to live in a smaller house which she owned in a part of the city occupied by tanners, where she and her daughters spun with distaff and wove *rebosos*, or shawls, and even sold breadfruit from a tree in their patio to eke out a living. This resolute half-Indian mother, who in her childhood scarcely knew how to read, had learned

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enough to teach a number of small children sent to her by families, and she also had a school for infants, charging six cents a week for each child.

The old inn in which Porfirio was born stood opposite to the great convent and church of La Soledad, which remains to this day a witness to the ancient grandeur of Rome in Mexico. It was a day when ecclesiastical power staggered the imagination. All things political and social bowed before its magnificence, its strength, and its wealth. From the stately capital, where Spain and Christianity had torn down Montezuma's temples and in their place had set up cathedrals and churches gorgeous and beautiful beyond anything even in Spain itself; from this citadel of Church power, where the archbishops had been viceroys and had had the Spanish flag laid on the ground at the cathedral door that they might walk over it, to the farthest point of California or Yucatan, and from ocean to ocean, everywhere the priest and the bishop, the monk and the superior, were both the keepers of the way to heaven and controllers of the secret springs of politics and government; gave absolute direction to organized society, and had such colossal wealth in their hands that they not only overwhelmed all by the splendor and dazzle of their altars, the majesty of their buildings, the glory of their vestments, the almost incredible jewels of their treasures, but they controlled the money markets and the rates of interest, so that the prices of the harvests and the rents for lands and houses were almost as much in the hands of the Church as the enormous fees charged for baptisms, marriages, and burials.

Religious processions were constant in cities, towns, and villages, and the people knelt in the streets as carved wooden figures, representing the bruised and bloody



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Christ and the always lovely Virgin, were borne about in public. It was not uncommon to see the Indians go to their knees at sight of a priest anywhere. In every house was an altar of some sort. The humblest peon's sun-dried clay hut had its crucifix, Virgin, and always lighted candle.

Through the mists of far-off years it is hard to recognize the man who bent history under the strength of his will in the fatherless boy, with great melancholy eyes, flat chest, and frail limbs, who used to go on feast days with his hard-pressed, brave, little half-breed mother out of the dingy, dish-cluttered inn into the vast, cool space of the church of La Soledad and kneel with the monks and the nuns and blanketed Indians before the great altar, gleaming with gold and sparkling with lighted candles, where the splendid Virgin stood above the chanting priests, glittering and blazing with emeralds, rubies, and diamonds, with tens of thousands of pearls upon her velvet robe—the most beautiful, the most awful, the most stupendous sight a Mexican boy might see, richer than anything else on earth, the center and summit of mystery and glory.

Already Mexico was entering the throes of that monstrous stretch of civil wars in which Santa Anna, conqueror of the preposterous Mexican Emperor Iturbide, was alternately president and dictator, intriguer, fighter, martyr, buffoon, and traitor. Already the vast power of the Church had almost automatically taken sides in the confusing and ever-changing conflict which was presently to engulf the nation in a general conflagration, in whose flame and smoke the old order would pass away.

Santa Anna was a soldier of fortune, to whom the powers and responsibilities of government were as

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painted scenery in a show. He played with the destinies of Mexico as he afterwards played with his own honor. Sword in hand he seized the presidency, turned it over to another, retook the office, abandoned it to still another, only to reconquer it; now breathing defiance to kingcraft and aristocracy, now strutting about as a dictator with the title of "Serene Highness"—tall, brilliant-eyed, high-browed, courtly, handsome, brave, charming, dashing, treacherous. There were angels, devils, and men chained together in his adventurous soul. From the day that he crushed the first Mexican empire to the time when he secretly offered to sell a part of his country to the United States in order to regain power in Mexico, he was always a marplot. Never was there a more fantastic combination of hero and humbug.

In 1838 there was "the war of the pies." France sent an expedition under the Prince de Joinville to attack Vera Cruz because Mexico refused to pay some ridiculous French claims, including those of a pastry cook who asked for \$60,000. In this attack a French cannon ball carried away one of Santa Anna's legs. Thereupon he had the limb buried with great pomp in one of the principal churches of Mexico City; but when one of the frequent revolutions again drove him out of power, the mob which had almost yesterday cried hosannas, broke into the church, tore Santa Anna's leg from its stately resting place, and, tying a rope to it, dragged it through the streets, hooting and jeering.

With Santa Anna's permission, Gomez Farias had become President of Mexico and had stirred up a revolution, backed by the Church, by promoting laws which forbade the civil authorities from enforcing the collection of church tithes or compelling the fulfillment of monastic vows, and prohibiting ecclesiastics from inter-

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fering in public instruction, which brought the university to an end. This was the origin of the Conservative, or Clerical, party, whose struggle with the Liberals swept the country into thirty-four years of internecine conflicts, almost inexpressible in their cruelties and treacheries.

Texas, settled by American colonists, had revolted against the sovereignty of Mexico, and even Santa Anna failed to crush the new republic, which was in time to become a part of the United States.

General Anastasio Bustamenté was elected President in 1837 under a new Constitution. There was a revolution against him in 1839, which was suppressed by Santa Anna. Presently there was another revolution against Bustamenté, who was seized in the national palace and held prisoner there, while the streets of the capital daily resounded with the noise of the fighting factions.

Then there was a sudden outcry from the Clericals, voiced by a brilliant senator named Gutierrez Estrada, to the effect that democratic institutions could produce only anarchy and weakness in the Mexican nation, that the great body of the people were absolutely incapable of functioning properly in a real republic, that their history, traditions, and racial characteristics proved that monarchy was the only form of government suited to them, and that the sole way out of the bloody discord and demoralization which had brought chaos upon the country was to be found in the choice of a king.

This stirred Mexico from frontier to frontier and there was another rush of revolutionary movements. Santa Anna, turning his arms against President Bustamenté, became dictator.

While revolution after revolution impoverished the country and confounded the masses of the people, far

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beneath the grotesque and sometimes ridiculous surface of things the raw forces of the republic and the forces of the rich and politically masterful Church were gathering for the frightful life-and-death struggle which desolated Mexico for so many years. It was not an issue of religion, for all were Catholics; but the monastic orders had grown so rich, had such immense territories, owned and loaned so much money, and had such a grave interest not only in taxation but in all questions of politics, that its leaders saw nothing but ruin and approaching confiscation in a government actually ruled by the ignorant Indians and their radical leaders.

After all, the monks had got their power, prestige, and wealth through three centuries of Spanish monarchy, and it was not until the idea of self-government had taken possession of the Mexican mind that the obedient, uncritical, and politically voiceless population had dared to question historical results, vested rights, or established institutions.

From the introduction of freemasonry by Mr. Poinsett, the first American Minister to independent Mexico, there had gradually grown secret centers and leaderships, in which the native unrest, the native ambition, and the native sense that foreign influence deprived the Mexican of conditions of equal opportunity in his own country, were more or less definitely organized. The Spanish flag had been driven out of Mexico, but the great monastic orders, nourished into governmental strength and aristocratic rank by Spain, remained, apparently a barrier to the vague and high-flown hopes of a democracy with more passion than wisdom and more theory than experience.

Besides, the monks had become gross and lax. There were here and there noble exceptions, as there were also

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in the centuries of the Spanish viceroys, but it is undeniable that the name of the Church was brought into contempt and ridicule by open monkish drunkenness, gluttony, and lewdness. In vain did the Pope attempt to investigate, reform, or punish these corruptions and bestialities, which offered such a fearful contrast to the teachings of the Church; but the great monastic orders had become too powerful for discipline and too worldly for reform. Behind them were massed the old Spanish elements, hoping for a return of monarchy; the moneyed and land-owning interests, fearing the power of an ignorant, penniless, and politically incompetent majority of the people, and all the ecclesiastical, financial, and monarchical influences of Europe; for it was commonly believed abroad that with the Spanish power removed from the control of Mexico, nothing dependable remained but the authority of the Church, however oppressive and immoral that power might have become through the long-continued accumulation of wealth and political influence by the Dominicans, Franciscans, Augustinians, and their allies in and out of the Church.

The regular bishops and priests were helpless in the presence of this mighty monastic monopoly, although the salaries of the twelve bishops amounted together to the enormous sum of \$539,000 a year, the Archbishop of Mexico alone having a salary of \$130,000, the Bishop of Puebla, \$110,000, and the Bishop of Valladolid, \$110,000.

The extraordinary, almost unbelievable, position of the Mexicans among the peoples of the world may be faintly appreciated when it is understood that the properties of the Church amounted in value in 1833 from \$179,000,000, with an annual income of \$7,500,000, according to Mora—Von Humboldt estimated these

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properties as four fifths, and Lucas Alaman as one half, the landed estate of the nation—to Miguel Lerdo de Tejada's estimate of from \$250,000,000 to \$300,000,000. Yet so absolute was the neglect of agriculture and industry in this vast and fertile country, and so wholly was the national mind given over to war, politics, ecclesiasticism, and the old Spanish search for silver and gold, that the total exports of the nation in 1828 amounted to only \$14,488,786, of which \$12,387,288 was gold and silver, leaving a total of other exports of only \$2,101,518. And this astounding condition continued for years, while the *alcabalas*, or internal custom houses, on all the state frontiers, made it practically impossible to go outside of local markets in agriculture; so that one part of the country might be overwhelmed with rich harvests and another part almost starving.

In that time of Porfirio Diaz's early childhood the Mexican Indians, who theoretically held the sovereignty of the country, had, in fact, no more to say in public matters than in the days of Spanish domination. The nimble and protean Santa Anna could at least fight, and when he appeared in the field there was always an army to follow him; his sword was turned against the Liberals in defense of church property and church privilege. Mexico had even in that period of general poverty an army of 40,000 men, costing about \$8,000,000 a year. The Indian either cowered at the feet of the monk or he desperately took arms against conservative authority of any kind. There was no intermediate ground for him between servile submission and bloodshed. This was the threshold of a war in which the Church would have to raise and support armies in the field.

## CHAPTER IV

### DIAZ TURNS FROM THE PRIESTHOOD TO THE LAW

LITTLE Porfirio Diaz was to be a priest. At least so his heroic half-Indian mother and his grave, square-jawed godfather, the priest Dominguez, would have it. At seven years he earned his first money as an altar boy in the Church of Santa Catarina. His first teacher in the primary school was a priest. A few years later he went to live and study with a cousin, the priest Ramon Pardo. Here he met a small companion named Justo Benitez, whose parentage was uncertain, but who was to powerfully influence his life.

Porfirio was a strange boy. There was an aloofness in his bearing, a quiet brooding, that approached melancholy. He was proud, reticent, and retiring, yet when aroused to action he had an imperious way and desperate energy. He was very thin, but strong, quick, and supple. His eyes were quite extraordinary. They were very large and of a rich blackness. When he was stirred they would dilate and there would come into them a peculiar shining intensity, which, with a sudden lift and spread of his sensitive nostrils, would give to his wide-jawed young face an expression, half menace, half command, that would startle and sometimes thrill the boy who had aroused in him the spirit which afterwards made itself felt on more than fifty battlefields.

In spite of his odd silence there was something in the

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pale, fatherless lad in cotton shirt and trousers, sandals, and round hat "woven of hair from a donkey's belly"—a passion for athletics, a disposition for command, to which his comrades naturally yielded—which might have warned his churchly guides that there was no priest to be made out of that fateful blending of Indian and Spanish bloods.

Already in boyhood the powerful Iberian strain of his ancestry had taken hold of the Mixteco inheritance in his veins; and in the hour when old Oaxaca, "the Virginia of Mexico," was being riven by the issue that divided the whole country into Clericals and Liberals, young Porfirio showed the attitude to life which he has maintained even to his eightieth year.

The key to his character as a boy was that he depended on himself. He wanted a gun to hunt in the mountains. Straightway he took the rusty barrel of a musket and the castaway lock of a pistol, and, carving a stout wooden stock with his own hands, he fashioned a weapon which served him well. He made such a good gun that presently he made others and sold them to the mountain Indians. His mother complained that she could not afford to have him wear out his shoes in hunting. He at once studied a shoemaker at work, borrowed some tools, and turned out shoes, not only for himself, but for the rest of the family. So, too, he observed the craft of a neighboring cabinetmaker and in a few days began to make furniture for his mother's house.

When he wanted anything in those days he did not pray for it, but made it with his own strength, intelligence, and courage, as he afterwards made Mexico.

The ghostly influences of Mother Church were pressing him toward the priesthood, and his dusky little mother knelt daily before the Virgin, her thin bosom



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heaving with the hope that her son might achieve that black-robed "gentleman's profession"; but even when he entered the pontifical seminary of Oaxaca, and the boys of that institution divided for play fights into Clericals and Liberals, Porfirio always led the Liberals, while his brother Felix always led the Clericals.

These school fights, which were sometimes carried on with stones, and had bloody results, simply represented the struggle in Mexican society at large. It was strangely prophetic that the Diaz brothers should, as schoolboys, have fought against each other, just as afterwards, with arms in their hands, they took opposite sides, with the same war cries on their lips; although the day came when they fought side by side under the flag of the republic, never to be divided again except by death.

When about thirteen years old Porfirio used to spend his afternoons studying physics in an empty cell of the great monastery of Santo Domingo, whose church was the architectural wonder of Oaxaca. Here he saw much of the extravagance and profligacy of the monks, noticed the women brought into the monastery, and had his youthful eyes opened to evidences of looseness and depravity that even the authority of Rome had failed to check.

Looking back in his old age to those desperate days, President Diaz has confessed that even such things made little impression upon his childish mind, although they formed a powerful and unforgettable retrospect afterwards when his political sense of right and wrong began to develop and clarify under the influence of a famous French writer on public law.

Little did the riotous monks of Santa Domingo dream that the slight, silent boy poring so patiently over his books in a narrow stone cell would one day use that

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monastery as a fortress, and that even an emperor would sue in vain for the support of his sword against the liberties of his country.

What a worker he was! At the age of fifteen he was dressed in trousers and jacket of tan-colored cotton drill, a small brown woolen hat and buckskin shoes, a mere slip of a boy; yet, in addition to his studies at the seminary and his work as an amateur gunsmith, shoemaker, and carpenter, he earned a little money teaching Latin to other boys at the rate of \$2 a month, and finally he asked the merchant Joaquin Vasconcelos to employ him as a clerk.

It was then that the struggle for the soul of Porfirio Diaz began—a struggle between theology and public law, which in the end unsheathed a sword that transformed anarchy into order.

One of his Latin pupils was the son of Marcos Perez, a tall, lank Indian lawyer, with piercing eyes and hollow cheeks, who was a professor of law at the state Institute of Arts and Sciences. This institution was a hotbed of Liberalism. It had developed implacable anticlericals like Benito Juarez, the great Indian lawyer and patriot, who had been one of its directors, and was now governor of the state of Oaxaca. Santa Anna, the dictator, hated this breeder of lawyers, whom, as a class, he had learned to fear, and did everything possible to harass and destroy it.

One evening Marcos Perez invited Porfirio to go to the Institute to see the prizes distributed by Governor Juarez. This was at the very time when the boy's godfather, the priest Dominguez, had set before him the ponderous leather volume of St. Thomas Aquinas's "Summa Theologiæ," which, as a preparation for the priesthood, was to teach him that revelation is a more



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trustworthy source of knowledge than observation and reason.

Porfirio put on his Sunday clothes and went to the house of Perez to accompany him to the Institute. There he found the tall professor talking to Juarez, the eloquent and unterrified leader whose name was accursed everywhere among the Clericals and whose influence was detested by Santa Anna and his kind—a short, thickset Indian, with dark skin, great dignity, and an unreadable face.

When Perez introduced his young friend to the famous governor, saying that he hoped the boy would be a law student in the Institute in the following year—a significant remark considering the fact that Porfirio was studying for a clerical career—Juarez reached out and shook the little fellow's hand with great heartiness. This made a deep impression upon the young student, for at the seminary no boy was allowed to speak to a professor without holding his arms across his body and bowing very humbly. Shaking hands with a superior was unthinkable. Yet Porfirio had actually shaken hands with the dread Juarez. The greatest of the Zapotecs, the noblest of the Liberals, the Constitutional champion in whom the native soul of Mexico uttered its defiance and looked unblinking into the eyes of monk and soldier alike, the governor of his native state, had smiled upon him and spoken to him with a courtesy that thrilled his sense of self-respect.

That was a night of soul tempest for Porfirio. The seductively open manner of Juarez, the speeches in the Institute, ringing with patriotism and defiant of tyranny, stirred his imagination and called loudly to his masculinity. When he went home he could not sleep. "I had an internal struggle the whole of the night," he

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said afterwards. In the morning, pale and excited, he went to his mother and told her that he had decided not to become a priest. At this the brave little widow began to cry. Porfirio's godfather, who was now a canon, had arranged a scholarship in the seminary and had promised to secure a good parish for him when he was ordained. With tears streaming down her face his mother explained what he must lose by his decision and described the difficulties she had to face in maintaining the family. For three days she wept every time she saw him. At last he could bear it no longer.

"Mother," he said, "I have decided to abandon my principles. For your sake I will become a priest."

But his mother looked into his face and realized what it all meant to him, and she refused to allow him to make the sacrifice. When his godfather learned that Porfirio had given up the ecclesiastical career and had decided to study law at the Institute—which was to him a sort of gateway to hell—the stern old priest declared that the boy was given over to evil, withdrew all promises of help, washed his hands of responsibility for him, demanded back all the books he had given him, and stamped the floor in a paroxysm of righteous rage.

The honest resolution of one man has often had consequences upon which the history of a nation hinged. It is not given to human wisdom to say what might have happened to Mexico had Porfirio Diaz choked down his new patriotic stirrings in 1849 and ultimately become a priest. No one who has studied his thorough methods, his astounding initiative, his iron will and singleness of purpose can have any doubt that he would have become a great power in the Church and that his genius as a strategist and organizer, together with his personal courage and intense instinct for fighting, would have given

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him command in the field; but whether even such a man could have succeeded against the republic in such a cause is not likely.

However, Porfirio was an outcast to his godfather, a social, political, and spiritual pervert, one given over wholly to perdition. And in the years to come his venerable godfather, as Bishop Dominguez, refused to see the face of the youth who had given up the Church. Not even on his deathbed would he receive him, although Porfirio, stalwart, bronzed by the sun, and wearing a captain's uniform, stood in the next room and, through an open door, secretly saw the stern old prelate die.

So, in the winter of 1849, the young man whom destiny was beckoning to the leadership of his country entered the Institute of Arts and Sciences. He had already studied scholastic theology, moral philosophy, natural philosophy, logic, Latin, and literature. In the Institute he studied drawing, French, civil law, canon law, international law, and general law. He spent nearly five years in this school.

Many who are unfamiliar with the genesis of Mexico's greatest constructive statesman—for his achievements outweigh even the noble theories of Juarez—have been surprised by the knowledge he has displayed in dealing with great crises of government, and not a few have been puzzled to know how a man who had spent practically his whole life in the field as a soldier could have found opportunity to gain the knowledge of principles and political philosophy which he brought to the tangled and almost hopeless affairs of Mexico even in that violent day when the mastership of the country was given to him by a triumphant army. The truth is that, in addition to his primary instruction, he received nine years of vigorous academic education—a little more than

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four years in the seminary and a little less than five years in the Institute.

President Diaz has said frequently that his first real political consciousness came to him when he read a certain French text-book on public law in the Institute. It was a work flaming with the imaginative democracy which inspired the political philosophers who brought on the French Revolution. It was a Latin echo of Thomas Jefferson. Its essential idea was government of the people, for the people, and by the people. It advocated universal democracy and manhood suffrage as the only just, the only sound, the only safe principle of government.

There was no hint in this book, which rang so strangely upon the character of the young patriot who had abandoned the priesthood, that there might be peoples to whom such a system of government was not possible; and there was Juarez in the Institute, as professor of civil law, and Marcos Perez, another professor of law, both Zapotec Indians, both men of wide learning, both eloquent speakers, and heroes to all Liberal Oaxacans—and with such a book before him, with such native manhood to lead him and inspire him, the twenty-year-old-youth was lifted out of and above his little city of noisy church bells, sandaled monks, strutting, jingling military whiskerandos, and half-fed, haggard Indian multitudes in many-colored blankets, and saw only a great ideal of human equality and universal suffrage, unconscious that the attempt to realize it among a people without the self-restraint or self-reliance of democracy in them had already brought chaos upon confusion in Mexico.

Before entering the Institute Porfirio made a sturdy effort to be a clerk in Señor Vasconcelos's service, but



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that honest merchant bade him to continue his studies and furnished him with a book of logic and the long cloak which the students were required to wear.

Although he studied law for nearly five years, during seventeen months of which he received instruction from Juarez, it was not in his nature to throw the whole burden of his support upon his mother, and he made shift to earn money. In 1853 and 1854 he was substitute librarian of the institute, dividing the monthly salary of \$25 with the titular librarian. He also took charge of the class of natural law and international law in the absence of Prof. Manuel Iturribarria, who had fled from the persecutions of Santa Anna, newly returned to power. He passed his general examinations in law on January 2, 1854, but was not admitted to the bar. Yet he entered the law office of Marcos Perez, and during much of the period of his attendance in the Institute he made money by assisting his master in suits, being finally appointed attorney of the village of Valle Nacional.

A terrible thing happened in 1854. Santa Anna, the dictator, had a few months before attempted to crush the Liberals by violence and had thrown Juarez into a loathsome submarine cell in the fortress of San Juan Uloa, at Vera Cruz. Now the tyrant discovered a patriotic plot in which Marcos Perez was implicated, and the brave lawyer was thrown into a tower of the Santo Domingo convent, and a strong guard of soldiers cut off all communication with him. The proceedings against him were secret. His life was at stake.

By an accident Porfirio made a discovery which enabled him to save his master's life. Being rent collector of a house owned by his cousin, the priest Ramon Pardo, and the house being occupied by Colonel Leon,

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prosecutor of the case against Perez, the young man was compelled to wait one day in the prosecutor's office, when he saw on the table the brief against his friend and benefactor, which, in the fortunate absence of Colonel Leon, he hurriedly read. In this way he discovered what the other prisoners had sworn to.

It was a matter of life-or-death importance that the tall prisoner of Santo Domingo should know what was in that brief. Not only did the liberty and, perhaps, the life of the patriot lawyer depend upon the information, but also the safety of other friends of the republic who had not yet been seized by the dictator.

It seemed almost impossible to reach the close-guarded prisoner. There were other Liberals in the cells of the convent, but the cell in which Perez was confined was a special place for the caging of dangerous monks, high up, thick-walled, and with one iron-grated window overlooking a courtyard.

In spite of this, Porfirio resolved that his friend should not perish. He and his brother Felix had become athletes and they planned to scale the walls of Santo Domingo. One night they made their way, hand over hand, in the darkness from one point to another, until they stood on the roof overhead from the small barred window of Perez's cell, which had a guard of fifty soldiers guarding it within the convent.

Porfirio tied a rope about his body and was lowered in the night by his brother, around whose waist the rope was also passed. As the future President of Mexico swung on the end of his hempen support, now brushing the rough stone wall with his turning body, now hanging clear, he could hear the hard breathing of Felix above in the terrible stillness. When he reached the window the gaunt, white-faced lawyer, realizing that

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something unusual was happening and hoping to distract the attention of the guard at his door, put on his shoes and walked up and down the cell reciting the Psalms of David in a clear voice. At the same time he approached the window stealthily. The sentry harshly ordered him to lie down. As the old man looked through the iron bars into the darkness he saw the set face, burning eyes, and swaying body of his faithful pupil. At this the prisoner announced in Latin, which the guards could not understand, that it was dangerous to speak, and asked Porfirio to procure pencil and paper for him.

Silently Porfirio gave the signal to his brother, who, after a desperate struggle against his weight, managed to pull him up to the roof again.

Two nights later he repeated his perilous feat, furnishing his beloved professor with writing materials and with a written statement of all the most important points in his case.

That desperate adventure saved Marcos Perez, who afterwards became governor of the state of Oaxaca and greatly helped the national movement that overthrew Santa Anna. After Perez's death, Diaz supported his daughter until she died, a gray-haired woman.

Even now, fifty-six years after, Mexican patriots stand in the courtyard of gray old Santo Domingo, which has been turned into a barracks, and gaze up at the little window where Porfirio Diaz, hanging in the night on the end of a rope, first exposed his life for his country.

## CHAPTER V

### DEFYING THE DICTATOR SANTA ANNA

MEANWHILE Mexico continued to suffer the agony and degradation of many revolutions. Santa Anna, whose mad and selfish eccentricities caused the Congress to banish him in 1845, returned to the country in 1846 and took command of the demoralized army in the war with the United States, which had taken Texas as a state while her territory was still claimed by Mexico. The first troops sent against the United States had rebelled, and their general, Paredes, even planned to turn the distracted and bankrupt republic over to the Spanish prince, Don Enrique. Paredes was beaten and banished. Then Santa Anna took charge of the army and turned the government over to Gomez Farias, who, to get funds for the war, confiscated a part of the church property; whereupon there was another revolution and savage fighting in the streets of the capital, which was ended by Santa Anna, who again took supreme control, presently to resign in favor of the lawyer Pena y Pena.

When the United States Army, under General Scott, swept from the Atlantic coast into the valley of Mexico—American soldiers actually played baseball at Orizaba with Santa Anna's wooden leg—and hoisted the American flag over Chapultepec Castle on September 14, 1847, the power of Santa Anna was gone for the time. Having been taken prisoner by the Texan army in 1836, he

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had basely agreed to recognize the independence of the little republic as the price of his own liberty. And now, when his country, crushed by the American invaders, was surrendering 522,568 square miles of territory in the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, including the great domain of California, in which gold had just been discovered, the beaten and discredited adventurer had skulked out of Mexico, having first tried to set himself up in the state of Oaxaca, from whose capital he was sternly excluded by Governor Juarez.

But that was not the end of Santa Anna. Plots, uprisings, revolutions continued to vex the country and drain it of its wealth and strength. It must be remembered that in the forty-seven years between 1821 and 1868 the Mexican form of government was changed ten times and that in that period of national independence there were about 300 successful and unsuccessful revolutions or revolts, to say nothing of the fact that at least fifty different persons held the supreme executive power as presidents, dictators, emperors, or regents. So that when General Herrera was elected President in 1848, and he was peacefully succeeded by General Arista, elected in 1851, there were more revolutionary proclamations and plots, and an uprising in Guadalajara, followed in 1853 by the resignation of Arista—who was promptly banished when the unspeakable Santa Anna returned to Mexico—and then, after Juan B. Ceballos and General Lombardini had failed to maintain order, Santa Anna came back at the call of conservative officers, bishops, and priests, and became an outright and absolute dictator, with the title “His Most Serene Highness.”

The dictator seized Juarez, who had retired from the governorship of Oaxaca, and sent him to the dungeons

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of San Juan Uloa, recalled the banished Jesuits to Mexico, provided himself with cash by selling 45,535 square miles of the country on the frontier of Sonora to the United States for \$10,000,000, and authorized Gutierrez Estrada—the famous senator who in 1840 had been compelled to fly from the popular rage when he proposed a Mexican kingdom—to go to Europe and negotiate for the virtual sale of the sovereignty of Mexico.

It seemed as though the republic was to perish, and open opposition to the dictator, who had the army, the aristocracy, and the Church behind him, was punished by imprisonment or death. In 1854 there were only two small railways in the country, fifteen miles in all, and the *alcabalas*, or internal custom houses, crushed all attempts to develop inland commerce. The Church, with its mighty revenues, and the great landed proprietors, were supporting Santa Anna, who had the army in his hands and the spending of more than \$19,000,000 of the national income, to say nothing of the \$10,000,000 to be paid by the United States for the splendid territorial surrender out of which Arizona and New Mexico were formed. Europe laughed at the dismal end of the republican experiment, to protect which the United States had threatened the Holy Alliance in the Monroe Doctrine.

Yet the moral nerve of Mexico was still alive. Although the colonels, bishops, and monks cheered the semimonarchy of Santa Anna, which would have been a monstrous joke were it not for its bloody persecutions, a revolution was proclaimed in the village of Ayutla, in the state of Guerrero, and the fight against the dictator in the south was led by General Juan Alvarez. This was the formal beginning of the final armed struggle between

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Church and State, but its immediate object was the overthrow of Santa Anna. Alvarez was one of the heroes of the war for independence. He was a full-blooded Indian, like Juarez, and had an Indian following. Being in the mountains of Guerrero, north of Oaxaca, his dashing guerrilla raids stirred the hopes of the oppressed Liberals everywhere.

The hearts of the terrorized patriots went out to Alvarez, but they spoke his name in whispers. To be known as a sympathizer meant instant imprisonment, perhaps death. Santa Anna's spies were everywhere, and Santa Anna himself, in a murderous rage, had taken the field against the rebels.

Suddenly, in December, 1854, the dictator decided to go through the sham of a popular vote, in order to give an appearance of legality to his power, and a plebiscite was ordered, although it was well understood that no man might vote for anyone but Santa Anna, save at the risk of his life.

It was in that time that Porfirio Diaz, twenty-four years old, showed the stuff that was in him.

On the day of the vote which was to confirm Santa Anna as dictator, the director of the Institute where Diaz was serving as a substitute professor of law in Oaxaca—Juarez having escaped from his dungeon and fled to New Orleans—asked all the professors to go to the palace in a body and vote for Santa Anna. Diaz refused to consent to this degradation.

Nevertheless, he went alone to the palace, which stood on one side of the plaza, opposite to the cathedral. It was a scene that might well have overawed the bravest man. The plaza was brilliant with massed troops. There were shotted cannons in position at the corners. Soldiers with set bayonets guarded all the streets leading to the

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plaza and the cowed populace looked silently at the glittering steel from afar.

Within the vestibule of the palace was a raised platform covered with a crimson cloth, and on a table was a huge book, in which voters were required to write their names and their choice. Here were Santa Anna's officers, grave, watchful, and there was a curious silence that went well with the stern, cold face of General Ignacio Martinez Pinillos, the governor and military commander of Oaxaca, who presided at the poll.

Young Diaz surveyed the ominous spectacle with keen interest. He had by this time developed broad shoulders and a deep chest. There was a fighting squareness in his chin, his jaws had a powerful sweep, and he held his head at an aggressive and alert slant. His eyes were more searchingly brilliant and black than ever and answered sensitively to the occasional quiverings of his thin, wide nostrils. He has since confessed that he went to the old stone palace that day in the hope that during the mock voting ordered by the tyrant there might be something to provoke an armed uprising, in which he might be able to strike a blow.

Presently one of his neighbors, Don Serepio Maldonado, appeared and announced that, as the representative of all residents in his division of the city, which included Diaz himself, he voted for Santa Anna as Supreme Dictator. Diaz at once protested and had his vote withdrawn on the ground that he did not wish to exercise his privilege.

Down the street and across the plaza, between the troops and the cannon, marched the professors of the Institute, where Juarez and Perez and other patriots now in exile had raised the consciousness of his country's wrongs in the soul of Diaz; into the shadow of the



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palace, up to the crimson platform, bowing humbly to the cold-faced governor, and writing down their names for Santa Anna.

Diaz stood by and watched his servile associates with flushed cheeks and flashing eyes. None dared to raise his voice against the corrupt and bloody usurper, who had made fugitives of Juarez and Perez, and was even then seeking the death of the heroic General Alvarez and his half-starved army of mountain Indians, the sole defenders of the republic.

As the young patriot looked, Professor de Encisco turned and asked him why he did not vote. Diaz replied that voting was a right which he might exercise or not, as he chose.

"Yes," cried the professor, "one does not vote when he is afraid."

Hardly had the taunt been uttered when Diaz grasped the pen offered to him, pushed his way through the throng, advanced to the voting table, and, without an instant's hesitation, wrote down the name of General Alvarez, the leader of the rebellion against Santa Anna. Before the dictator's official creatures could realize that their master had been deliberately defied before their very eyes by a youth of twenty-four years, Diaz had disappeared from the palace.

It was decided that the young Oaxacan had committed a felony, and presently a shoemaker, passing Diaz in the public garden, warned him that orders for his arrest were out. While the police were searching for him he got a pair of pistols from the house of the exiled Perez. His boy servant brought to him his horse, pistols, and machete. Then he summoned a notorious and desperate bandit, named Esteban Aragon, who had once secretly proposed a plan of revolution to him; and ac-

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accompanied only by this companion, who stole a horse for the journey, the student who had dared to publicly defy Santa Anna in the midst of his armed hirelings rode for his life out of his native city toward the Mixteco mountains. The Indian blood danced in his veins as he dashed on to the rough ridges from which it was drawn. Just outside of the city a party of rural police ordered them to halt, but the fugitives made glittering circles in the air with their machetes, dug the spurs into their horses, and swept through the shouting police line irresistibly.

Even in that wild ride, which was his entrance into warriorhood, and knowing that the dictator's troops would be hot on the road after him, Diaz stopped at the village of Ejutla, explained that his companion's horse was stolen, gave it up, and procured another one.

Soon after, he and Aragon joined a band of barefooted, blanketed Indian revolutionists in the hills. They were untrained peasants, partly armed, and were led by an uneducated Indian named Herrera—but Diaz had just come from an experience that made the slovenly band of mountain peasants look like shining heroes compared with the rabbit-hearted scholars who had groveled at the feet of Santa Anna's officials in Oaxaca and had denied the cause of Mexican liberty and constitutional government for the sake of safe and easy lives.

Diaz was not only a powerful athlete and a good rider, but long rides and tramps among the surrounding hills and valleys, and much hunting and other open-air adventures, had given to him a manner, which, with the command of military terms learned in a class of strategy and tactics organized by Juarez in the Institute, greatly impressed the Indians, and soon Herrera, won over by the young horseman's dignity and obvious instinct for leadership, agreed to share the command with

## DEFYING SANTA ANNA

him. The force consisted of about 200 men, untaught mountaineers, mostly armed with machetes and farm implements.

With these humble followers Diaz proposed to make a stand against trained and well-armed soldiers. There was a strong body of government forces in the neighborhood, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Canalizco, but the enemy which he was determined to face was a force of from 80 to a 100 cavalry, and 50 infantry, which had been sent out from Oaxaca to capture him. Diaz ordered his men to lie down on the heights overlooking the ravine of Teotongo. Down in the ravine was a spring of water. The pursuers would undoubtedly halt there to drink. Under Diaz's directions the Indians loosened a great number of rocks above the spring, and adjusted levers, so that they could be rolled down at a moment's notice. After a while the little army sent out to take Diaz prisoner made its way into the valley and a part of it halted beside the water. Then at a signal Diaz and his men opened fire and a moment later an avalanche of rocks was hurled down upon the troops. The bewildered soldiers fled in one direction, while the excited Indians promptly fled in another direction. That was the first battle of Mexico's greatest soldier.

Soon after, the little Indian force was dispersed and Diaz continued on through the mountains alone with the patriot bandit Aragon, touching many villages, until at last he reached the village of Coanana. There he decided to stop in a friend's house and he dismissed Aragon. It is interesting to know that this desperate robber, whose life was transformed by patriotism, and who was at the side of Diaz in his first fight for the republic in the Mixteco mountains, afterwards served as

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a guerrilla leader for the republic during the war against European intervention. When Diaz was besieged by Bazaine at Oaxaca, Aragon placed himself with 400 men at his orders, and won distinction by his bravery. After the fall of Oaxaca he escaped and was the chief guerrilla leader against the French in the southern part of the state. One night he was surprised while playing cards and, in spite of a desperate defense, a French guerrilla cleft his skull open with a machete.

## CHAPTER VI

### ON THE THRESHOLD OF CIVIL WAR

THERE was a stir in the Indian villages of the rugged Zapotec mountains when Porfirio Diaz was appointed subprefect of Ixtlan. Stalwart, deep-chested, tanned by the sun, fleet-footed as a deer; with a martial air and the prestige of having defied Santa Anna in the palace of Oaxaca and scattered regular troops with a rabble of half-armed Indian peasants, he was a hero in the eyes of the mountaineers among whom Juarez was born.

Santa Anna had been defeated in the summer of 1855. Juarez, having escaped from his dungeon, had fled to New Orleans, and afterwards reached General Alvarez and the Liberal forces at Acapulco. The dictator in vain tried to capture this city, and finally was driven from the field, flying, as usual, to Havana, and thence to St. Thomas. That was the end of his power in Mexico. He was long afterwards sentenced to death for treason, but Juarez magnanimously changed the penalty to eight years of exile, and in the very year that saw Diaz master of Mexico, 1876, Santa Anna, in his dotage, died almost forgotten.

After the overthrow of the dictator the triumphant Liberals chose General Alvarez as President, and that white-haired and infirm soldier placed Juarez in his Cabinet as minister of justice and religion.

Through the influence of stanch old Marcos Perez

## DIAZ, MASTER OF MEXICO

the new governor of the state of Oaxaca, General José Maria Garcia, sent young Diaz to his post in the rough mountains.

The Indians of Ixtlan were notoriously ignorant and cowardly. Their timidity and clumsiness had created a reputation which made them the joke of the countryside. Even the state, seeking for military recruits, had contemptuously refused to accept the Indians of the Ixtlan district for service in the National Guard.

Now Diaz revealed something of the rare judgment of human nature and hard-headed resourcefulness which helped him to make a nation out of Mexico.

Then and there he organized the forsaken mountaineers into a soldiery that served him through all the wars that lay before him.

Diaz was barely twenty-five years old. Yet already the passion for organization and leadership was strong in him. He called the awkward and untrained men of the mountains together and set them in a line, barefooted, blanketed, and embarrassed. Then he stood before them, took off his jacket, threw out his sinewy chest, held his head high, worked his arms and shoulders to show his knotted muscles, and deliberately walked up and down before the ranked slatterns, inviting the astonished men to look at the evidence of his physical power. He told them that he had once been thin and weak, but that by practice he had made himself strong, and he assured them that any man could make himself equally muscular and lithe.

There was something about Diaz as he exhorted the despised mountaineers to make themselves fit to defend their villages, something commanding and convincing in his sunburned face as he strode up and down in the little plaza, which was surrounded by the women and

## ON THE THRESHOLD OF CIVIL WAR

children of the village, that caught the fancy of the Indians.

Soon the young leader was drilling the men regularly in athletic exercises, into which he gradually introduced military methods. There was some grumbling, but he was determined to make soldiers out of his villagers in spite of themselves, and he popularized his work by organizing dances for the women.

It must be understood that Diaz had no instructions to raise soldiers. The idea was entirely his own and he said nothing to the governor about it, but went on quietly drilling his men, until, with guns in their hands, he gave them their final exercises as fighting men. He even established a night school and personally taught the officers to read and write. This was the beginning of the famous Oaxaca battalion which followed him in many battles and was the terror of the republic's enemies; nay, even when he was hunted like a beast and made his way to Ixtlan, it was these very men who began the armed march which ended in his final victory and the beginning of his thirty years' rule over a peaceful and united country.

Before he organized this remarkable little body of soldiers, Diaz had had no practical military training save that in 1847, when the invading army of the United States had penetrated into the state of Oaxaca, the National Guard was hurried forward, while a company of juveniles, among them young Diaz, did service for a few days in the local capital. This company was derisively named "*Peor es Nada*" ("Nothing is worse").

Much stilted and emotional nonsense has been written about Porfirio Diaz, mainly by servile or hysterical Mexicans, but it is not fair to hold him responsible for the gross eulogies of scribblers whose preposterous flat-

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teries have amused or disgusted such a serious and masterful character. The author of these lines has many times heard him speak with scorn and ridicule of the high-flown and servile exaggerations with which his career has been described. Yet it would be hard to overestimate the solid judgment, patriotic foresight, energy, and resourcefulness of the broad-shouldered young student of twenty-five years who, without advice or orders, turned timid and half-clad Indian louts into good soldiers in the rugged heart of the Zapotec mountains. Neither Cæsar nor Alexander could have done more. And while he drilled the childlike mountaineers, and taught them how to read and write, he paid out of his own pocket the church fees for baptisms, so that hundreds came to call him godfather in the desperate days when he and Mexico called for men to save the oppressed republic.

Hardly had Diaz got his Indians ready for fighting when he had an opportunity to use them.

In November, 1855, Juarez, now a powerful member of Alvarez's Cabinet, persuaded the venerable President to proclaim a new and never-to-be-forgotten law, abolishing the special privileges of the Church and the Army.

Up to that time no ecclesiastic could be sued, and no army officer, however humble, could be tried, in the ordinary courts. Not even murder or treason could deprive military men of the protection of their own special tribunals. Nor could any civil action, however great the property involved, lie against an ecclesiastic in the secular tribunals. Even the women who lived in the establishments of priests frequently declined the jurisdiction of the regular courts when sued by their dressmakers. It was impossible to maintain the republic under such



## ON THE THRESHOLD OF CIVIL WAR

horrible conditions of inequality, for most of the crimes were committed by men claiming military immunities, while perhaps a third of the property of the whole country was in the hands of the Church, which also monopolized the business of money-lending. The "Law of Juarez" destroyed this vast system of injustice, making priests and soldiers equal with ordinary men before the law, although the ecclesiastical criminal tribunals were still permitted.

It was a terrific blow to the power of the Church, which provoked armed revolt. Even Ignacio Comonfort, who had helped to overthrow Santa Anna, and was now in the Cabinet of Alvarez, shrank from what seemed to be a desperate step against the sanctities of privilege. But Juarez had his way.

The Cabinet was divided, with Juarez leading one side and Comonfort the other.

Then hell seemed gradually to break loose and the foundations of the nation shook as the enraged churchmen, secretly aided by their military friends, planned rebellions in many parts of the country. The political sky grew black. The Church worked itself into a high pitch of fury. The gaudy, jingling generals and colonels mingled their curses with the indignant outcries of the bishops and monks. The old order, with its vast wealth, its almost perfect organization, its hireling soldiery, its social prestige, and its terrifying power of ecclesiastical anathema, prepared to resist what its ablest leaders recognized as the first step toward its final and complete destruction.

Poor old Alvarez, alarmed by the growing menace of the situation and desiring to save the weak and impoverished republic, resigned from office and appointed Comonfort as Substitute President, in the hope that his

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successor's more moderate attitude might conciliate the Church and its forces.

Juarez was implacable in his determination to have the new law executed. President Comonfort promptly dismissed the Indian lawyer from his Cabinet and sent him back to be governor of Oaxaca again. But even Comonfort did not dare to abandon the "Law of Juarez," especially after the Mexican Congress gave it solemn legislative sanction, although the Substitute President had to crush a fierce Church uprising in Puebla by armed force.

Down in Oaxaca the governor of the state, General José Maria Garcia, who, after the triumph of the Liberals over Santa Anna, had declared himself to be an adherent of the Liberal cause, suddenly and unexpectedly turned against it and attacked a small body of Liberals, who shut themselves up in the convent barracks of Santo Domingo.

Lean, gray-haired Marcos Perez sent word to his heroic young pupil at Ixtlan; and Diaz, who had been watching in his mountain village for some signal, swept down to Oaxaca with his drilled Indians, followed also by a multitude of mountaineers armed only with farm implements, but determined to die if necessary in support of their leader. Leaving the bulk of his 400 soldiers concealed in a defile near Oaxaca, Diaz started into the city with the rest of his force, but Liberal messengers met him and announced that Governor Garcia had again declared himself to be a Liberal.

Soon after that Garcia again showed signs of treason to the republic, and once more Diaz marched with his Indians into the state capital. It was a critical time in the history of Mexico. Juarez was on his way to Oaxaca, having been appointed governor again by Com-

## ON THE THRESHOLD OF CIVIL WAR

onfort. The state was seething with treason and plots. It was believed that Comonfort was hostile to Juarez and jealous of him, and that he was secretly conniving with the desperate and rebellious Church leaders to destroy the radical Liberal elements. What more dramatic and crushing stratagem could be thought of than that the native state of Juarez, author of the new law for the administration of justice, should rise and trample him into the dust!

Diaz arrived in the very nick of time. Governor Garcia sent a severe message to the young commander, ordering him to return to the mountains and disband his men. With flashing eyes Diaz answered that he did not recognize the authority of Garcia and would wait for the arrival of Governor Juarez. Thereupon he quartered his men in the convent of Santo Domingo, which was the Liberal headquarters. Then he went to the palace and told Garcia to his face that he would take orders from no one but the new governor.

When Juarez arrived in Oaxaca all was peace and he was greeted by the new-made soldiers of his own dusky mountain people. The noble Zapotec afterwards commissioned Diaz as a captain in the National Guard.

Yet the real struggle for control of the destinies of Mexico was yet to come.

In June, 1856, the Congress passed a law compelling the Church to sell the whole of its landed property except buildings used for public worship. This far-reaching act was drawn up by Miguel Lerdo de Tejada (a brother to Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, afterwards the principal minister and adviser of Juarez), but it was directly inspired by Juarez, who, while restoring order and representative government in Oaxaca, kept in close touch with the vortex of national politics. It was not a

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law of confiscation, but a measure to destroy the continuity of the Church's mighty secular power through mortmain. In order that the republic might survive, it was necessary that the national future should be free from the dead hand of the aristocratic past.

The Church resolved to fight for its privileges, yet the time was not ready for public resistance by the bishops, although the priesthood refused to confess or absolve any person who purchased ecclesiastical property. Armed revolts occurred in many parts of the country. The Bishop of Puebla denounced the law and the Archbishop of Mexico actually asked the government to lay the matter before the Pope. Then there was another attempted rebellion in Puebla, where the friends of the Church assembled 15,000 troops to smash the republic. However, Comonfort promptly scattered the insurgents and took enough church property to pay the cost of doing it.

Notwithstanding the dreadful prospect of a civil war backed by the Church and its rich and powerful allies, to say nothing of the inevitable hostility of great European nations in sympathy with papal indignation and protest, a Constitutional Congress promised by the Liberals was called, and a new Constitution, largely inspired by Juarez, was adopted, and signed by President Comonfort on February 5, 1857, although it was not proclaimed till September 16th, the anniversary of Hidalgo's cry for Mexican independence.

This memorable Constitution which, in one day, swept away the whole power of the Church and reduced it to a private institution, its entire property confiscated, and its priesthood politically disfranchised, brought on a ten years' war, almost without a parallel in civilized countries. Diaz had turned from the priesthood to be-

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come a lawyer. The "War of the Reforms" made him a soldier.

The Constitution of 1857 provided, among other things, for the freedom of the press; the nationalization, or confiscation, of about \$200,000,000 of property owned by the Church; a prohibition of the ownership of real estate by the Church; the abolition of all military and ecclesiastical privileges; convents, both of monks and nuns, were suppressed; separation of Church and State was ordained; the clergy were disqualified for voting or holding office; religious demonstrations outside of churches were forbidden; the clergy were not permitted to wear ecclesiastical dress in the streets; Mexico was opened in all its parts to free immigration.

When this great organic law was proclaimed—William H. Seward declared it to be the best instrument of its kind in the world—the Clericals organized the revolution of Tacubaya, in the suburbs of the national capital, and Felix Zuloaga, who had been a croupier in a gambling hall, assuming the rank of general, proclaimed a rebellion under the "plan of Tacubaya," which met the new Constitution of the Mexican republic with a programme declaring, among other things:

That church property and church revenues should be inviolate; that the special privileges of the Church and Army should be resumed; that the Roman Catholic religion should be restored as the sole and exclusive religion of Mexico; that there should be a censorship of the press; that immigration should be confined to immigrants from Catholic countries; that the Constitution of 1857 should be abolished and a central dictatorship established, with the Church practically in control; and, if possible, that monarchy should be restored, or a European protectorate arranged.

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Pius IX declared the government of Mexico to be under the curse of the Church, and throughout the unhappy country, already wasted by interminable strife, there went up a cry for war to the death, a cry sounded at the altars and echoed in the vast monasteries, where even the monks themselves armed for the onslaught.

## CHAPTER VII

### DIAZ'S FIRST BAPTISM OF BLOOD

CAPTAIN DIAZ had come down from his mountain post toward the end of the year 1856 when the first savage mutterings of civil war were heard.

He was now a hero among his fellows, who remembered how the law student had openly defied Santa Anna in the state palace, and had scattered troops sent in pursuit of him.

Twice he had come to the rescue of Oaxaca with his drilled mountaineers. But there was no swagger in him. He was as silent, as serious, and as energetic as ever. He had received a small salary for his civic work in Ixtlan, but not one centavo had he accepted for his military services. Now he was a professional soldier, regularly elected to a captaincy in the National Guard.

There was a tendency to revolt on the Pacific coast of the state of Oaxaca. Angry priests were stirring up the population, which had a considerable negro element. Governor Juarez went in person to Tehuantepec to quiet the people and explain matters. But there was a negro uprising in the district of Jamiltepec, headed by José M. Salado. The black mob had been worked into a frenzy by local parish priests against the new Constitution. So, his patience exhausted, Juarez ordered the National Guard to march and subdue the rebels. The expedition

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of 400 men was commanded by Colonel Manuel Velasco. Captain Diaz accompanied it.

On August 13th the troops arrived at the village of Ixcapa, in the heart of the rebellious district. The fight began in the streets of the village. Diaz was advancing on foot at the head of his company, sword in hand, broad-shouldered, his face tanned brown, his great dark eyes burning with the emotion of the approaching death grapple. In front of him he saw an advancing body of the enemy with a shouting priest riding a horse and holding up a large black cross. He was preparing to attack this force when, passing an intersecting lane, a party of the enemy appeared on his right flank, and he had to turn quickly to engage it. At the first volley he received a wound which caused him to fall to the ground; but he struggled to his feet, pale and bleeding, and continued to fight. He had been shot through the body and he staggered as he moved, so that his astonished soldiers cheered him as he went on into the thick of the battle. In spite of his agony, the young soldier who was yet to command armies and remake history, continued to fight until his bayonet charge had driven back the flanking troops. Whereupon the main body of the enemy was attacked in front, the rebel Salado commanding in person. The leader swung a machete and cut open the head of a sergeant who was loading a musket, but the sergeant pulled the trigger and the charge, which included the ramrod, struck Salado in the breast, and he was then bayoneted. That broke his force, which fled, giving the Liberals a complete victory. Many of the fugitives were drowned in attempting to cross a stream. Some were shot in the water. Others were eaten by alligators.

After the battle Diaz had a terrible time of it. He



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had been shot in the left side. First, the major of his battalion bandaged his wound to stop the hemorrhage. Then a drunken Indian applied pine resin, eggs, and fat to the wound. Presently he was removed to a hacienda near Ixcapa, and there a surgeon made two incisions and probed for the bullet, extracting nothing but a fragment of bone. Whereupon the wound was poulticed.

After a stay of eighteen days at the hacienda, with the rest of the wounded, some of the men started to carry him in a litter to another hacienda about sixty miles away. There had been heavy rains and the ground was wet and slippery. The litter carriers occasionally fell and upset the future President of Mexico into the mud. During all this time he made no complaint. Presently he had a horse saddled and, in great pain, rode the rest of the way. On September 30, 1857, Captain Diaz arrived in Oaxaca. There he was examined by good surgeons, including Manuel Ortega Reyes, afterwards his father-in-law. It was decided that probably the bullet was encysted, and poultices and caustic potash were applied. Both the friends and enemies of Diaz have learned many times that he is an exceptionally hard man to kill.

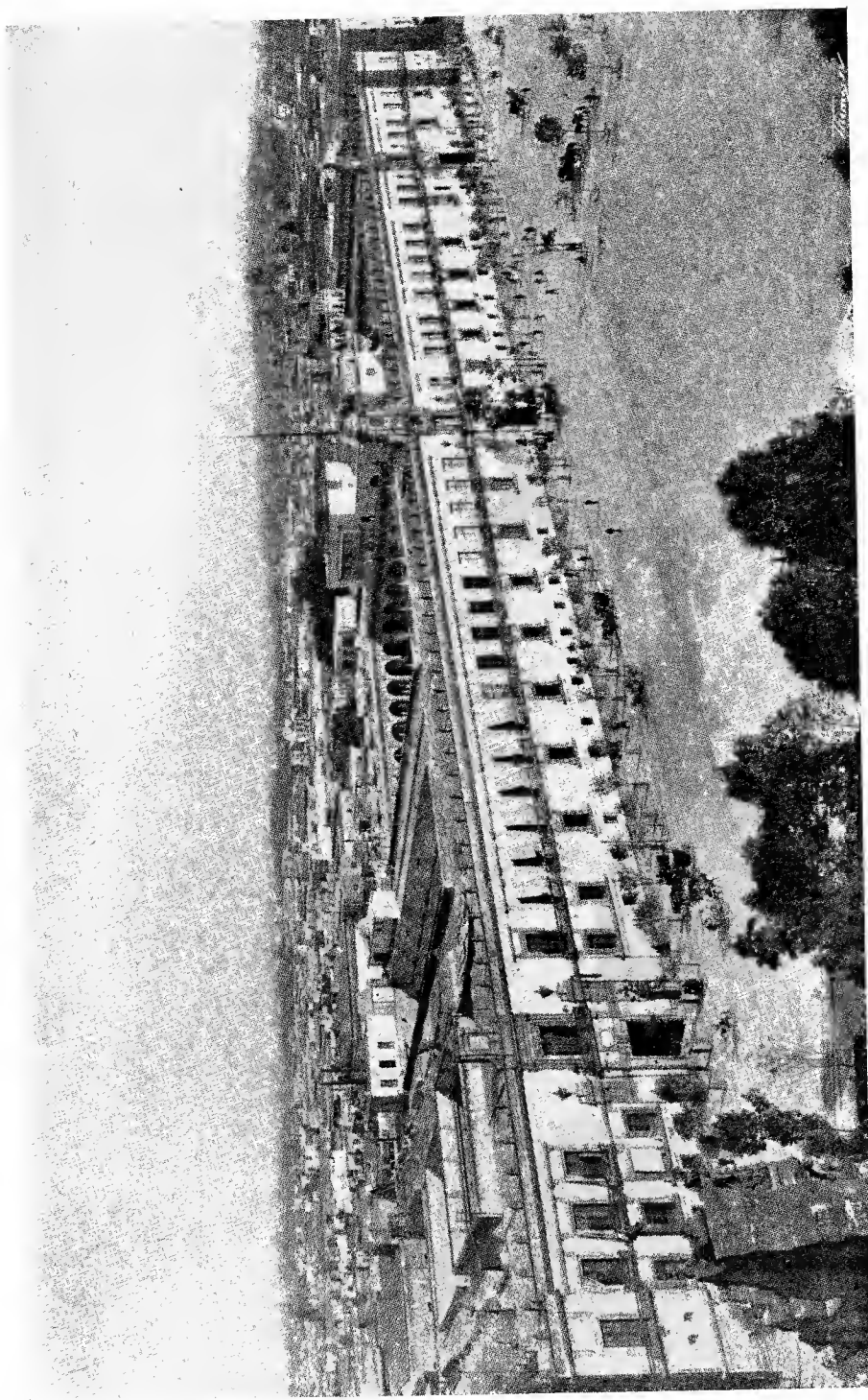
This first baptism of blood aroused in Diaz a patriotic appetite for fighting that took many bloody years to satisfy. Looking into the seething abyss of his country's future, he saw something that drew from his Spanish-Indian blood its most heroic qualities. Even in the midst of the murderous excitements which surged up around him in his native city, he was always reserved, sober, thoughtful, steady. Again and again in his career he has proved himself to be a man capable of profound political emotions. The depth and intensity of his love

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for his country has been revealed in lightning flashes of utterance when his loyalty and courage were put to the test in great crises; but his ordinary attitude has been that of a practical patriot, seeking how to make use of his strength and intelligence, intent upon deeds rather than words; and if he has at times burst into the high-sounding phrases of the civilization which begot him, it has been when the exigencies of leadership called for eloquence.

The whole scene of Mexican national life suddenly changed after he returned to Oaxaca. The armed Church, uttering its war cries throughout the country, and launching its anathemas from every altar, staggered President Comonfort. On the very eve of the proclamation of the new Constitution he had discovered an armed conspiracy of the monks of the great convent of San Francisco, whose establishment covered a large part of the City of Mexico. The next day he sent troops to the convent, suppressed it, and cut two wide streets through its grounds.

Comonfort had been reëlected to the presidency and Juarez had, at the same time, been elected Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and thus became Constitutional successor to the President. The storm of Church hostility and the sudden activity of revolutionists, supplied with funds by the Church and led by discontented military adventurers, shattered the nerve and confounded the judgment of Comonfort. In an hour of despair he surrendered to the Clerical party, abandoned the new Constitution, dissolved Congress, and put Juarez in prison. There was constant fighting between the Liberals and Clericals in the streets of the national capital. Presently Comonfort changed his mind again, released Juarez, and attempted to restore order. But it



THE NATIONAL PALACE, CITY OF MEXICO.



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was too late; the civil war had begun in earnest, and Comonfort fled from the country on February 5, 1858.

After the flight of Comonfort, Juarez became the Constitutional President of Mexico. Thereupon, the enemies of the republic declared Zuloaga President. The Liberals were compelled to abandon the City of Mexico—which was occupied by the usurping Clerical government—and assembled in Queretaro, where Juarez was regularly installed as Constitutional President on January 10, 1858. Juarez moved to Guadalajara, where he organized his government. But even in Guadalajara there was war. The Liberals and Clericals fought savagely in the streets for possession of the city. Mexico and Puebla were in the hands of Zuloaga and his forces, but the rest of the country seemed to be true to Juarez and the Constitution.

One of Juarez's officers, Colonel Landa, who had been intrusted with the defense of the presidential palace, turned traitor. He made prisoners of the President and his Cabinet, and then coolly informed Juarez that he would release him if he would order his troops to surrender Guadalajara to the enemy. The great Indian refused the offer with scorn. Whereupon Landa brought a squad of soldiers into the room and commanded them to shoot the prisoners.

As the executioners formed in line, Juarez advanced and faced them, and when the muskets were aimed and the order to fire was given, he raised his head and calmly looked the soldiers in the eyes. For an instant the men faltered. Juarez remained immovable, his glance fixed steadily upon them. Then every man grounded his musket. Landa did not repeat his order. He accepted a hastily gathered bribe of \$8,000 and contentedly retired with his forces.

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The Clerical army, under General Osollo, pressed so hard against Guadalajara, that Juarez was unable to hold the city and, retiring with his Cabinet, he vigorously made his way to Manzanillo, sailing from there to the United States, and thence reaching Vera Cruz, the fighting stronghold of the Liberals, where he established his government in the seaport leading to the capital.

With the death of General Osollo the supreme command of Zuloaga's army passed to General Miguel Miramon, a brilliant, handsome, and dashing young Mexican-born soldier of twenty-six years, who claimed descent from a Marquis de Miramon who died at the side of Francis I in the battle of Pavia. This intrepid fighter was afterwards dictator of Mexico and was executed with the so-called Emperor Maximilian. His two principal generals were Leonardo Marquez, a murderous and unprincipled scoundrel, whom Maximilian finally characterized as "the greatest blackguard in Mexico," and Tomas Mejia, a full-blooded Mexican Indian, of Guanajuato, who fought with ability and courage against the liberties of his country until he, too, was shot with Maximilian.

While Juarez was flying to Vera Cruz, the Pope sent his blessing to Zuloaga, the usurper and ex-croupier, and *te deums* were chanted everywhere as armies and bands of guerrillas went forth, accompanied by shouting monks and religious banners, to drench the soil of Mexico with the blood of its patriot Indian soldiers, for the real republic had few to defend it now save the descendants of the prehistoric Oriental races who peopled the land before Columbus and Cortes came with Christianity and gunpowder.

Ability to fight does not mean ability to govern, nor does a strong desire for liberty always imply an under-

## DIAZ'S FIRST BAPTISM OF BLOOD

standing of or capacity for democratic institutions. Shut up in Vera Cruz and besieged by 7,000 men and 40 cannon, under Miramon, who had thrust Zuloaga aside and become President himself, Juarez, "the man in the black coat," answered the thunders of the embattled Church and the menace of great nations like England, France, and Spain, which had officially recognized the usurping government at the capital, by decrees confiscating even the ecclesiastical revenues and completing the separation of Church and State, and by simple but thrilling appeals to the Mexican masses to fight to the death for a Constitutional republic founded upon justice, equal rights, and religious liberty. His decrees revived and put into force the great scheme for stripping the church of its power which Comonfort had abandoned.

While the majestic words of Juarez rang out over the immense theater of civil war in Mexico, there was germinating in the soul of a young captain in Oaxaca, whose wounds still caused him to limp about the streets, the leadership and executive power that, through the bloody mists of desolating wars, was to bring to the wasted nation peace and safety, and establish the objects of democracy even against some of its most sentimental prescriptions.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FIGHTING FOR THE REPUBLIC IN TEHUANTEPEC

STILL carrying in his body the bullet he received in the battle of Ixcapa, where about 400 Liberal soldiers had defeated nearly 1,000 of the enemy, Diaz moved painfully about Oaxaca, listening, with set mouth and stern eyes, to the terrible stories of slaughter and pillage that came in to the old city almost every day after Juarez became President. He was still very weak and his wound was hardly healed, yet he was eager to take the field again.

The enemies of the republic, determined on gaining control of the southern part of Mexico, had filled it with irregular troops, raiders, and guerrillas, headed by veteran Spanish smugglers, bandits, and experienced military desperadoes from the old Carlist army, who had been brought across the ocean in pursuance of the plan of the Clericals to destroy the Constitution of 1857 and the government which was responsible for it. The real leaders in this brutal warfare were the Cobos brothers, Marcelino and José Maria, and next in importance was one Conchado.

Soon after Juarez had left Oaxaca he had been succeeded as governor of the state by José M. Diaz Ordaz, a relative of Captain Diaz. The struggle for possession of the city between the Liberals and Conservatives, as the Clericals called themselves, became so violent that



## FIGHTING IN TEHUANTEPEC

Governor Ordaz had to declare a state of siege, and in a proclamation he said :

“ National Guards : It is necessary to show our audacious enemies that it was you who gloriously defeated the reactionaries on the fields of Acatlan and Ixcapa. Their bands are commanded by Spaniards. Prove to these foreigners that the National Guard of Oaxaca [they were all Indians] knows how to make the name of the state respected.”

The Cobos brothers and their armed ruffians possessed themselves of the central part of the city, in which the state palace stood, so that the Liberals became the besieging force.

Diaz, who still walked with difficulty, had taken up his residence in the Santo Domingo convent barracks. It was just then that troops commanded by José Maria Cobos seized the palace of the state government and made it his headquarters. Governor Ordaz, with the National Guard under Colonel Ignacio Mejia—afterwards the famous republican general—took refuge in the convents of Santo Domingo, El Carmen, and Santa Catarina, where Cobos besieged them.

In this crisis—for the fall of the proud old capital of Juarez’s native state would have been a terrible blow to the Constitutionalist cause—Diaz volunteered for active service, insisting that, while he was still sick, he was strong enough to fight.

Then followed a characteristic stroke of strategy which President Diaz has described in his personal memoirs :

“ When we had been besieged for about twenty days, and demoralization, through lack of food and ammunition, was producing its effects, I discovered that one of

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•the barricades which the enemy had erected at the street crossing known as the *Esquina del Cura Unda*, consisted largely of sacks of flour and bran. I noticed that bullets in striking it sent up puffs of white powder. This suggested to me the idea that by a vigorous and sudden attack on the entrenchment we might get the food of which it was composed. I proposed to the governor that we should make the assault by stealth, and we agreed that at that moment (it was after ten o'clock at night) I should set out from our lines with twenty-five men of my company to bore through a continuous block of houses to the last one, which was inside the enemy's barricade, and from which it could be enfiladed. I got the twenty-five men I needed, yet they were not men of my company, but irregulars, including night watchmen with no military training.

"During the night of January 9, 1858, we commenced boring the walls, all of adobe. We wet the walls to soften them, and used carpenters' tools instead of picks, in order to make less noise. At each house through which we bored I had to leave one man in the yard and one on the roof, to cover my retreat.

"I had only thirteen men with me when I reached the last house. It was a little grocery. Some of the enemy's men were in the grocery and some in the entrenchment when the last hole was bored, opening into the back yard of the grocery. It happened that the leader Cobos himself was at that moment in a lavatory, and, seeing a wall suddenly open, and men emerging from the hole, he thought it wise to stay where he was.

"Forming my men in the back yard, I advanced to the front yard, and, finding a young woman there, shut her up in a room to prevent her from giving the alarm. I then occupied the back room of the shop. The windows of this commanded the entrenchment whose defenders I dislodged at the first volley, and they joined their comrades in the front shop.

"Then there was a fight between the front and back

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shops, and soon the corpses were piled high in the doorway between.

“After half an hour’s fighting I had only a few men left, and I gave orders to the bugler to sound a signal (a bugle-flourish known as the Diana) which, according to the plan arranged with Colonel Mejia, meant that I needed help. Colonel Mejia either failed to hear or did not understand, but our men in the towers of the churches of Santo Domingo and El Carmen set the bells ringing as in celebration of a triumph.”

It was in this desperate situation that Diaz first came face to face with General Manuel Gonzalez, who afterwards fought for the republic against European intervention and was raised to the presidency by the very man he tried to destroy that day.

“The fight had been hot,” continues President Diaz, “but the enemy had time enough to send a reinforcement of twenty men, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Manuel Gonzalez, afterwards a general of division. When I had lost nine men in the back shop, and was left with only three men and my bugler, I saw that our plan had miscarried because I had not received the promised assistance. I threw in quick succession several hand grenades into the front shop, in order to retreat without immediate pursuit. But in the retreat I had the misfortune to lose the line of the boring. My men had deserted their posts, and in one house I lost my way. Fortunately the wall of the yard was not high and I climbed it just as my pursuers came in sight. My deviation threw them off the scent and I reached our lines in safety. The attempt to get food was a failure.”

In the week which followed this adventure the suffering and demoralization among the besieged Liberals was so frightful that Governor Diaz Ordaz and Colonel Mejia were in despair, and to save the famished Indian garrison

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shut up in the convents, they decided to abandon the city to the enemy and fly to the mountains. When this became known, Captain Diaz and a few other young officers agreed to disobey the order to retreat, and, instead, to make a decisive attack on the palace, the stronghold of Cobos. Neither the governor nor Colonel Mejia were in a position to coerce these bold officers, so it was decided to punish them for their audacity and contumacy by putting them at the head of the attacking columns.

This furious assault, which gave the city again into the hands of the Liberals, was made at dawn on January 16th, by three columns of 200 men each. Colonel Mejia held 400 men in reserve. Captain Diaz's old wound disabled him so much that he could not buckle on his sword, yet when Lieutenant-Colonel Velasco fell at the head of the second column he at once took command of it, and under a tremendous fire he united the first and second columns, whose commanders were shot, and dashed against the front of the palace, from which the enemy delivered deadly volleys, entering it by the main door, while the third column broke in at another point. There was a tremendous struggle inside of the palace, but the enemy fled in confusion, abandoning to the Liberals a quantity of money, arms, and ammunition, in addition to many prisoners. The reserve column completed the victory.

At the close of the fight Captain Diaz found that his wound had opened again. He was in a torment of pain and was weakened by the constant loss of blood. Notwithstanding his condition, he promptly mounted a horse, and with the blood streaming from his side he rode with 600 men in pursuit of the force commanded by Marcelino Cobos, which more than doubled the strength of the pursuing column in numbers. It was

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a hot march of about 165 miles, but on February 25th Cobos's army was overtaken at Jalapa, eighteen miles west of the city of Tehuantepec, and thoroughly beaten, the wounded captain distinguishing himself by bravery and energy in the decisive fight. For that victory the governor appointed Diaz to be governor and military commandant of the department of Tehuantepec.

It was in Tehuantepec, often completely isolated and forced to rely on his own judgment to govern a hostile population and meet the ceaseless attacks of ruthless guerilla bands, that the young officer of twenty-eight years began to show the power and discernment which afterwards attracted the attention of the civilized world.

The city of Tehuantepec was so bitterly opposed to the Liberal cause that when Diaz had a military band play in the plaza before the church on Sundays, the people would stop up their ears that they might not commit the sin of listening to music played by enemies of the Church. All about the picturesque little capital, with its famously beautiful women and sturdy Zapotec men, there stretched a wilderness of tropical jungles, infested by deadly reptiles and wild beasts, a country of malignant malaria and venomous mosquitos. Through this almost impassable region there roamed rebellious Indians and bands of irregular troops sent under bold and cunning leaders to wear out and overwhelm the valiant young Constitutionalist leader in Tehuantepec and his constantly dwindling garrison.

It is hard to imagine a situation more exasperating, nor one calling more for persistent courage, loyalty, and alertness than that which now confronted Diaz. Forty-eight years afterwards, when he had completed the great Tehuantepec National Railway, connecting ocean to ocean

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across the Isthmus, from Puerto Mexico to Salina Cruz, with magnificent modern harbors equipped at either end of the international commercial route, it was his privilege to stand, as President of Mexico, in the presence of the official representatives of twenty nations and declare the system open to the commerce of the world. Yet in those early days, when his administration at times became an independent government for lack of communication, the defense of the republic in Tehuantepec developed into an almost-incredible ordeal.

In spite of fevers that wasted his strength, made his face gaunt, and brought dark circles under his big, melancholy eyes; in spite of the gnawing pain of his unhealed wound; in spite of the hostility and treachery in the city, and the cruel, almost barbarous, soldiery threatening and attacking him from all sides, he gave battle to the enemy in some form or other almost every week for nearly two years. Yet his wound gave him such constant torture that he could not gird on a sword.

At first the old Carlist soldier Conchado kept threatening Tehuantepec with a heavy force of Indians who had been worked into an almost insane fanaticism by priests. Diaz moved out against this column, and on April 13, 1858, he defeated it at the ranch of Las Jicaras, Conchado himself being killed in the battle. This victory brought to him the rank of major in the National Guard. The commission was sent to him through his fond little half-breed mother in Oaxaca, who had cried so hard when he refused to become a priest. Meantime the governor changed the names of offices in the state, and Diaz became *jefe politico* of Tehuantepec.

Even after the smashing of Conchado's force matters grew worse. President Diaz has given an interesting picture of his situation at that time:

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“ My position at Tehuantepec was extremely difficult, because I was cut off from communication with the government and had no other resources but those which I could procure in a country completely hostile to me. Having to fight the enemy almost daily, my force had greatly diminished. Still, when I needed reinforcements, I was able to call on a hundred or two hundred men from Juchitan [the village whose Indians afterwards tortured and murdered his brother Felix], who, however, would only serve for a few days at a time, and whom I paid for their services at a considerable sacrifice, owing to the scarcity of my funds.

“ The enemy were in possession of the roads, which were impracticable for travelers, as all were robbed with impunity. In order to receive correspondence from Oaxaca I had to sally forth at the head of an armed force, and this I did about once a week, sometimes going as far as seventy-five miles from Tehuantepec. My only friends were the parish priest, Mauricio Lopez, a Dominican friar and native of the Isthmus, of considerable enlightenment, excellent sense, and liberal ideas, and much esteemed among the Indians; the local judge, Don Juan Avendaño, uncle of Don Matias Romero (the celebrated Mexican diplomat and statesman); and Don Juan Calvo, watchmaker and postmaster, and extensively connected. Had it not been for these three friends who rendered me most important services, and for a secret police which I established, I should have remained in absolute ignorance of what was happening around me, for almost the entire population was hostile, and my position would have been untenable.

“ My situation got worse and worse toward the close of the year 1858, because the state government sent me neither funds nor troops to take the place of the men I had lost. I considered it indispensable to confer with the governor in order to describe my position to him. Most of the soldiers who remained were bound to me by ties of personal affection. One day I marched out

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of Tehuantepec at the head of my men as if on one of the usual expeditions to receive mail. After reaching a certain point I informed the soldiers of the condition of affairs, and explained to them my intention of going to Oaxaca, promising that I would not abandon them and would be back with them inside of five days."

The leader kept his word to his followers, although at a cost of deep heart-pain. His little dusky mother was dying when he reached Oaxaca. With wet eyes, and lips quivering with emotion, the soldier tore himself from her bedside, and before he had reached his men again she was dead, sending to him her tender blessing.

All that Diaz succeeded in getting from the governor was a temporary reinforcement of troops under Colonel Cristobal Salinas, which returned to Oaxaca after two weeks, leaving him worse off than before. He then wrote to Juarez, who was at Vera Cruz, and who sent him \$2,000, this being one of the few cases in which he received pecuniary aid from the government.

"When Colonel Salinas withdrew," says President Diaz in his memoirs, "my situation became critical, because the Indians of Juchitan began to communicate with the disaffected population of Tehuantepec. Fortunately an unexpected incident warded off this great danger. On January 1, 1859, according to custom, hundreds of families of Juchitan came to take part in the New Year's festivities at Tehuantepec. The report had got abroad that I had distributed arms and ammunition to these Juchitecos, and that they were carrying them in the bullock carts in which they returned to their village. So, on the way home, the enemy attacked them. I came to their assistance, not only with men of Juchitan, but with the two companies of my battalion. We killed a great number of the enemy, pursuing them into a lagoon till the water was up to our waists.



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“Considering this to be a favorable opportunity thoroughly to win over my suspicious allies, I escorted the train of carts on foot, until, close to Juchitan, my orderly overtook me with my horse. We passed the night in that village and I summoned the inhabitants to a gathering at which I explained to them the necessity of making short work of the pronunciados [Conservative guerrillas]. In this way I succeeded in getting about two thousand men to enlist, whom I divided into small parties, in order to make a complete hunt for the enemy. This was done, with very good results, as many of the enemy’s guerrillas were killed, many arms seized, and, above all, all danger of concerted action between the Indians of Juchitan and the Conservatives of Tehuantepec was averted.”

On June 17, 1859, Diaz fought a battle at Mixtequilla, in which he defeated a large force under Lieutenant-Colonel Espinoza. In recognition of this brilliant action he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel by the state government.

It must be remembered that the young soldier and administrator, who was now only a little more than twenty-eight years old, was carrying on practically an independent government. He gave the enemy no rest. With almost incredible energy he made repeated night marches across a tangled tropical wilderness, in which the monstrous, reptile-infested undergrowths were made still more difficult of passage by countless streams and swamps, repeatedly attacking and scattering the enemy at daybreak.

He grew thin. His cheeks were hollow, and his great, dark eyes shone out of cavernous sockets. The skin of his face, tanned to the color of leather by the fierce sun, was drawn tight over the bones, and his mouth, now shaded by a small black mustache, had acquired a for-

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midable sternness. No Indian of the surrounding jungles was more swift of movement or keen of eye. He could walk or run or crawl or climb with the most desperate of the forest-bred. He could trail an enemy without sleep or food. He seemed to see in the dark. His Indian soldiers followed him into the most dangerous situations without question, for their broad-shouldered, restless, tireless leader seemed to have "second sight" and a charmed life. The convinced man is always convincing, and the stubborn heroism of Diaz made heroes of his Indian soldiers.

It was in this time of ceaseless fighting, when the leader had not only to march night and day with his men, and at the same time ferret out and defeat the plots of the enemy in Tehuantepec—not to speak of the problems of civil administration and revenue—that Diaz came near meeting an appalling fate which befell his brother Felix years afterwards.

As a consequence of the publication in the department of Tehuantepec of the Laws of Reform issued by Juarez at Vera Cruz, and which established civil marriage and civil registry, separating Church and State, nationalizing church property, secularizing cemeteries and sweeping away the temporal power of the Church, the Indians of Juchitan, believing that an attack was being made on their religion, rose against the state government of Oaxaca. These Indians and the people of a single ward of the city of Tehuantepec were the only allies of Diaz. In his hapless and isolated position he could not afford to lose the strength of Juchitan, and he was not strong enough to meet its challenge by force. Here he gave another illustration of his marvelous capacity for mastering difficult and perilous problems by sheer pluck and reasonableness. If modern Mexico is largely a mon-

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ument of the genius of Diaz, it is impossible to understand the working out of such a vast result in such fearfully unfavorable conditions without considering the intelligent simplicity, iron will, and common-sense tact displayed by the young ruler of Tehuantepec when the friendly Indians of Juchitan revolted and it seemed as though the enemies of the republic were about to destroy him.

It is better to tell the story in the terse, modest language of President Diaz himself :

“ When informed of the uprising, I went to Juchitan, accompanied by my friend, the Liberal friar Mauricio Lopez, an aide, and an orderly. Arriving at Juchitan, I left my companions on the outskirts of the village, intending to reach the house of Don Alejandro de Gyves, an old resident and rich merchant, a Frenchman, much esteemed and well connected. My intention was to send for the ringleaders and have a talk with them, in order to win them over. But before I had reached the house of de Gyves I met a party of tipsy rioters who carried arms. On seeing me, knowing I served the government against which they had risen, they were about to shoot me; but I succeeded in restraining them, assuring them that I was their friend. We entered into a conversation and I succeeded in calming them.

“ I assured them that I had no armed force with me. I told them who my companions were and where I had left them, urging the Indians to go and see for themselves. This they did, and when they returned to the plaza with my companions, Fray Mauricio, speaking in the Zapotec tongue, assured them that the law of civil registry [it was this that had stirred the Indians most] was in no way antagonistic to the faith, for if it had been, he would have been the first to take up arms against it.

“ Fray Mauricio was interrupted by Apolonio Jimenez, one of the village leaders, who some years later murdered

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my brother Felix, and who proposed to his fellow Indians to kill the friar and myself then and there, because, if the friar were allowed to go on speaking, he would surely succeed in winning over the people. But one of the older Indians, who was much respected in the locality, severely reprimanded Jimenez for his proposal. Thereupon Fray Mauricio was allowed to finish his speech, and the prediction of Jimenez proved true, for all agreed that they had done wrong and would abandon their hostile attitude. In this way I surmounted one of the gravest difficulties which confronted me during the period of my administration on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec."

Gradually Diaz sank a victim to malaria. Even his iron constitution could not withstand the shocks, strains, and privations of perpetual warfare in a country of tropical morasses. He kept on his feet as long as he could stagger about, but finally he took to his bed. Just then the enemy made a sudden attack upon the city and attempted a siege of the barracks in which the Constitutionalist leader lay racked with fever. Diaz rose from his bed, seized his sword, and, cheering his men, drove the attacking forces back. Then he fainted and was carried back unconscious to his bed by his soldiers.

In the closing months of 1859 the future seemed very dark. Cobos had again attacked the city of Oaxaca and driven out Governor Ordaz, who had established his government in the mountains of Ixtlan. Diaz was now cut off from both the general government and the state government and had to rely on such taxes as he could himself collect from a hostile and sullen population, but he paid his soldiers daily, and he also paid the judge, the master mason of the town, and the schoolmaster. He established a sort of foundry for the manufacture of bullets and also drained the surrounding swamps.

About that time an American man-of-war visited

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Ventoso and some of its officers went to Tehuantepec, where they were entertained by Diaz. During the banquet the American officers drank freely of the wine served to them, particularly the surgeon. Presently one of the officers made a speech, during which, looking the Mexican leader in the face, he declared that the United States did not usually intrust such posts to mere youths, who had scarcely smelled gunpowder. At this, one of Diaz's companions answered that the Mexican commander might be young, yet probably not one of the Americans present had had, like him, the honor of carrying about a bullet in his body for years. The American surgeon thereupon arose unsteadily, fumbled at Diaz's wounded side, and exclaimed, "By Heaven, it's true! I'll extract the bullet right now."

Diaz stood up smiling.

"I thank you," he said with grave courtesy, "but you have had a little too much champagne for such work to-day. You may take out the bullet to-morrow."

On the following day, nearly two years after the battle of Ixcapa, a large musket ball was drawn from the unhealed wound.

On the very same day Diaz received an order from Juarez's government in Vera Cruz to conduct, at all cost or risk, from Minatitlan, on the Atlantic coast, to Ventoso, on the Pacific coast, a cargo of armament, consisting of 8,000 rifles, some carbines and sabers, and a large case of ammunition, including 800 kegs of gunpowder and 100 pigs of lead, all consigned to the white-haired General Juan Alvarez, who was gallantly maintaining the Constitutionalist struggle in the state of Guerrero. In spite of the serious surgical operation which he had just undergone, Diaz rose from his bed, mounted his horse, and set off for Minatitlan. A

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single day's delay would have meant the loss of the cargo, which was precious to the cause of the republic beyond words to express. It was a long and terrible journey during which the enemy vainly tried to capture Diaz and his cargo, but he surmounted all difficulties and succeeded in temporarily hiding his cargo in the forest near Juchitan.

Meanwhile the Liberal general Ignacio Mejia was completely defeated at Teotitlan, and Cobos, having again gained possession of the city of Oaxaca, sent out a column and captured Tehuantepec. After Diaz had succeeded in concealing the arms and ammunition intrusted to him, he decided to recapture Tehuantepec from the enemy. His hands were blistered by awkward attempts at rowing on the rivers he had traversed and he was still suffering from his wound, but he was as eager as ever to continue the fight for the republic. Taking a force of armed Juchitan Indians, he made a detour toward Ventoso and then moved rapidly on Tehuantepec. Just before daybreak on the morning of November 25, 1859, he saw the outpost of the enemy on the road.

"When I perceived their campfires," he says, "I dismounted, left my horse with the men, and, accompanied by four officers remarkable for their courage, I stealthily penetrated into a cornfield, when we were effectively concealed until we reached a point where the outpost was. The surprise was complete and successful, for we captured all the men of the outpost without firing a single shot. Not one escaped.

"Then we arranged our forces in two columns, one to attack each of the hills occupied by the enemy. I retained under my own command enough men to attack the barracks. The signal for the attack was the reveille of the enemy. When the band inside of the barracks began to play, I advanced with my forces along one of the

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streets radiating from the plaza, and was inside of the barracks before anyone could retreat and give the alarm. The surprise was so complete that we found the guard in the doorway, still lying down. In the same way we surprised the men in their sleeping places. After an exchange of shots, not lasting half an hour, the barracks was mine and I was able to protect the column of Captain Cortes, which was descending from one of the hills, its commander having been seriously wounded; and I was also able to detach a party to support Lieutenant-Colonel Gallegos in effecting the occupation of the other hill."

The cavalry of the enemy had been sent out from Tehuantepec on the Juchitan road to repel this attack, but when it returned to the city it found Diaz in possession.

This victory of 300 men over 1,000 meant the safety of the large shipment of supplies for Alvarez's fighting patriots in Guerrero. Diaz had received authority from Juarez's government to destroy the cargo, but he replied that he would keep it to fight the enemy. He had actually captured hundreds of arms in addition to the cargo.

Soon after this the cargo was taken from its hiding place, carried to Ventoso, and safely shipped to Acapulco in charge of José Maria Romero, a brother of the distinguished Don Matias Romero. When the news of this successful enterprise reached Vera Cruz, Juarez, taking on himself the power which really belonged to the governor of Oaxaca, commissioned Diaz as a colonel of the National Guard.

Not only did the young hero show in this time of peril and uncertainty the qualities of a brilliant, discerning, and self-sacrificing soldier, but his moral courage grew with the difficulty of his position. Diaz discovered at one time that his men were being picked off in the streets

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of the city by old followers of Cobos, who, defeated at Jalapa, had returned to their homes. He had a few of the treacherous assassins shot. Then there came a communication from Governor Ordaz, "If you shoot any more, I will cause you to be prosecuted." Diaz had reported the execution of five men convicted of second offenses. Upon receiving the Governor's stern message, he answered: "You can have me put on trial if you please, because if I catch any others in the act I will do the same thing. I have already pardoned some of them and they mistake my leniency for weakness." A few days later he had another group shot, and reported the event to the governor, who, however, sent no reprimand. That ended the assassinations. He could be hard, even fierce, when necessary, but he governed, when possible, gently, reasonably, flexibly.

In the midst of his exhausting and perplexing work, Diaz was visited by the Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg, the distinguished French archæologist, who wrote this pen picture of him:

"His aspect and bearing strongly arrested my attention. He presented the most perfect native type I had seen in my travels. I imagined that I had before me Cocijopig in his youth, or the hero Cuauhtemoc as I had pictured him to myself. His appearance of distinction, his noble features slightly bronzed by the sun, seemed to embody the most salient traits of the ancient Mexican nobility. Porfirio Diaz is still young. He was a student at Oaxaca and had not yet finished his course when the civil war broke out and he embraced a career of arms.

After that interview I had occasion to meet him nearly every day, for with two or three other officers of the garrison he took his food at the house of my host. I therefore had opportunities for studying his personality and character. Quite aside from his political ideas, I



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can only say that the qualities which I discovered in him in our daily intercourse confirmed the good opinion of him which I had formed at our first meeting, and it would certainly be a very good thing if the other provinces of Mexico were governed by men of his stamp."

## CHAPTER IX

### DIAZ RESCUES HIS NATIVE CITY

IN spite of his victories, Diaz was restless and worried. He had held Tehuantepec for the Constitutional republic against war, treachery, and sickness, and was the secure master of the Isthmus. But it vexed his mind and challenged his patriotism that while the government of Juarez was ignominiously penned up at Vera Cruz, where the great Zapotec continued to resist the Church and its army under young Miramon, the city of Oaxaca should be in the possession of the Spanish hirelings, Marcelino and José Maria Cobos, while the legitimate state government skulked in the mountains.

So, on January 5, 1860, the impatient leader set out from Tehuantepec, resolved on rescuing his native city from the enemy. His force was a band of Juchitan Indians, naturally drunken and quarrelsome villagers, whom he had armed, equipped, and drilled. There were 300 of these Indians, besides what was left of the National Guard, about 100 men.

At first he moved toward the village of Tlacolula, in the vain hope of uniting with the forces of the fugitive state government. After a two weeks' march he reached the lands of the Xagá hacienda, near the ruins of Mitla—the noble and unexplained memorials of a vanished race, pride and mystery of the historic valley which gave Diaz birth—and here he came in sight of a body of the enemy's

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troops. It was the van of a column of 1,300 men which had started out for Tlacolula to look for Diaz and his men; but Diaz had reached Tlacolula first. The van tried to conceal itself in a little wood. The vigilant Liberal commander detected the cavalry scouts through his field glasses. The van was commanded by Colonel Antonio Canalizo, and the main body was led by the redoubtable Marcelino Cobos himself.

In the very sight of ruined Mitla, whose carved and crumbling walls proclaimed the grandeur of ancient Mexican civilization, the militia colonel, less than thirty years old, had now to fight for modern Mexico and her liberties against a force more than three times greater than his own, commanded by a hired Spaniard. It was an unequal fight, but Diaz, almost in sight of his birthplace, accepted it without hesitation. The Juchitecos, who were opposed to fighting away from their own village, became insubordinate. They declared that they had already fulfilled their agreement in going as far as the neighborhood of Oaxaca, and that they proposed to go home to Juchitan. Diaz remonstrated, but in vain. Then he decided to give them a lesson. Forming his forces in line he gave them an ordinary tactical order. It was obeyed by the Oaxacans. The rebellious Indians of Juchitan remained motionless. The young colonel pretended not to see the general disobedience, but turned his attention to an insubordinate sergeant who stood close to him when the order was given. He scolded the sergeant, knocked him down, and gave him a thorough kicking. Whereat the Juchitecos became earnest and observant soldiers again.

“I arranged my force,” says Diaz, “in the following order: In the van, the men from Chiapas; in the center,

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the men from Juchitan; and in the rear, the men of the National Guard, ordering those in the rear line in a loud voice, so that the Juchitecos could not fail to hear, to run their bayonets through any man who lagged in the march."

An hour later the van of the enemy attacked the little Liberal force, but was driven back.

In repulsing this assault Diaz gave his soldiers an illustration of the power which one trained and intelligent man can exert in battle. Taking a musket in his hands he aimed carefully at the advancing troops. His first shot killed Colonel Canalizo. Diaz took a second careful shot, and Captain Monterrubio, the commander of the first squadron, tumbled dead from his horse. These two shots completely demoralized Canalizo's column.

Diaz occupied a hill between Xagá and Mitla, and there the infantry and artillery of Cobos attacked him savagely. The men of Juchitan fled in a body and could not be stopped. In spite of that, the handful of soldiers of the National Guard, led by Diaz, dislodged Cobos; but he returned to the attack, and the reduced force of Liberals was unable to withstand the overwhelming numbers of the enemy. Diaz had to abandon his position, spiking his guns as he retired. He had left only seventy-two soldiers of the second Oaxaca battalion. It was a defeat, yet even the Clerical newspapers in Oaxaca praised the small band of patriots for the gallant fight they made.

Diaz moved swiftly toward the mountains to join a Liberal column from Ixtlan, where Governor Ordaz was. On the next day, January 23, 1860, Marcelino Cobos, having again joined José Maria Cobos, the leaders of the enemy's forces decided not to wait for Governor Ordaz and his troops to descend into the plain, but, elated

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by their victory over Diaz, they rushed forward to engage the state troops among the foothills. There was a battle at Santo Domingo del Valle. The Cobos army was defeated, but Governor Ordaz was mortally wounded and died a few hours later.

Three days later, on January 26th, Diaz joined the state forces with his men. Governor Ordaz being dead, the command was assumed by General Cristobal Salinas. No attempt was made to pursue the Cobos brothers, who retreated to Oaxaca.

Smarting under his defeat, Diaz insisted on besieging Oaxaca at once. The siege was established, and the Liberals possessed themselves of some outlying positions; but their operations were hampered by dissensions as to the governorship between Colonel Salinas and Don Marcos Perez, who claimed to be acting governor. Juarez, at Vera Cruz, heard of these squabbles and sent General Vincente Rosas Landa, who on February 12, 1860, took the supreme military command and directed the siege. After three months of sluggish operations, Landa heard that a force had been sent against him from Mexico City, and considering it impracticable to take Oaxaca, he abandoned the siege and retreated across the mountains, finally reaching Juarez at Vera Cruz.

During this retreat in the hills the feeling of the soldiers was so bitter that some of them planned to kill Landa, but Diaz defeated the plot by making it known that he would defend the general with his own life. At Vera Cruz, Landa complained to Juarez that the Oaxacan officers were incapable, but the Indian President had a surprise in store for him. Hardly had the general uttered his complaint than Juarez informed him that these incompetent officers had won a very important victory over the Conservative leader Trejo, in the

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foothills of the Ixtlan mountains, and had sent word of the fight so swiftly as to beat Landa in his journey.

This victory made possible the reorganization of the Liberal forces and a resumption of the siege of Oaxaca under command of Colonel Salinas. On August 2, 1860, the Liberal army again arrived in sight of Oaxaca. Three days later there was a general battle before the city. The besieged forces came out and opened the fight. Here once more Colonel Diaz distinguished himself in action. He commanded a division which engaged the center of the enemy's line and put it to flight, notwithstanding an obstinate resistance. An old soldier who saw Diaz in the thick of the action that day says that he never looked upon a more terrible countenance. His features, usually so calm and set, were wrought into an almost indescribable expression of fierceness. His eyes seemed to blaze. His deep voice rang out repeatedly over the battlefield as he led his soldiers against the desperate foe. The enemy retreated into the city. The battle was continued all day, but it was not until midnight that the Cobos headquarters were occupied. The Liberals took 300 prisoners and large quantities of ammunition and other supplies.

President Diaz has written the following description of his part in the taking of Oaxaca:

“With 700 men I joined Colonel Salinas. On the following day, August 4, 1860, we reached the hacienda of San Luis, about two kilometers from the city of Oaxaca, where we passed the night. At dawn the next day I discovered that there was in our rear a strong outpost of the enemy, which would have prevented us from returning to the mountains if we had attempted it. This outpost consisted of a half of the Ninth Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Manuel Gonzalez

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[afterwards President of Mexico]. I sent against this outpost a force commanded by two captains, who dislodged the enemy and forced them to join the main body. Just at that time Marcelino Cobos was repulsed at the hacienda of Dolores, and, simultaneously, I was joined by additional troops, when General José Maria Cobos, with the main body of his forces, three batteries of artillery and the remains of troops defeated at Dolores, made a determined attack on my position at the hacienda of San Luis. We on our side made a general advance, engaged Cobos on the plain, captured his heaviest guns, and obliged him to retreat into the city.

“Colonel Salinas then ordered that I should try to reach the Plaza de Armas. Overcoming a tenacious resistance in the streets along which I had to pass in order to reach the plaza, losing many soldiers and officers, and being wounded myself by a bullet which disabled my right leg, without penetrating the bone, I succeeded in dislodging the enemy from the Plaza de Armas, the palace, the cathedral, and the convent of La Concepcion; so that only the convents of Santo Domingo and El Carmen remained in their possession.

“I immediately began to bore through two lines of houses in the direction of the convent of Santo Domingo, so that my forces, in approaching, might be protected from the enemy’s fire. My purpose was to rush to the attack from the houses opposite to the convent, and to protect the attacking forces with men stationed on the roofs of the houses. This operation took the whole of the day and part of the night of August 5, 1860. Colonel Salinas was now with me, and the operation was undertaken with his approval. Things had advanced so far that all was in readiness for the assault at daybreak on August 6, when we learned that the enemy had knocked down a portion of wall of the convent garden and had escaped.

“As I had been suffering from a wound since nine o’clock of the previous morning, and unable to walk, I

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had been on horseback throughout the day and the night, and was unable to stand upright, much less to fight."

When Juarez, at Vera Cruz, read the dispatches of Colonel Salinas, together with newspaper and private descriptions of the battle, he was deeply moved, and exclaimed with much feeling: "*Porfirio es el hombre de Oaxaca*" ("Porfirio is the man of Oaxaca"). The hero was then advanced to the rank of colonel in the regular army.

Diaz's foot was disabled and he had to limp for a long time, yet he was appointed commander of the garrison of Oaxaca by his old master, Don Marcos Perez, now governor of the state. He made a determined effort to keep on his feet and attend to his duties, but was forced to go to bed, and did not rise from it until September 15, 1860. While thus weakened by the bullet he received in the assault on Oaxaca, he was stricken with typhus fever, and there were times when it was thought he could not live.

After the battle in which Cobos escaped from Oaxaca, Captain Felix Diaz, the younger brother of Porfirio Diaz, criticised Colonel Salinas for failing to pursue the enemy. Angered by this, Colonel Salinas sent Felix Diaz with a mere handful of men and scanty ammunition to overtake the forces of the formidable guerrilla leader. The captain overtook Cobos at La Seda and defeated him, taking ten cannon and many prisoners, among them about 400 dragoons. These men were won over to the Liberal side and later on became the basis of a new regiment, known as the Oaxaca Lancers.

At the beginning of the War of the Reforms, Felix Diaz was serving in the Clerical army. He had risen to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. It may seem puzzling



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that two honest and patriotic brothers should have been fighting on opposite sides when the fate of their country was at stake; but as Felix was in the army when Santa Anna returned to power in 1853, and as the entire army recognized Santa Anna, he merely followed the example of his comrades.

“While I was at Tehuantepec in 1858 and 1859,” says President Diaz in his memoirs, “my brother was much distressed that we should be on opposite sides; and yet he did not feel that he could violate his fealty to the government. About that time or a little later, the newspapers published a false report of my death in battle in the state of Oaxaca; and when my brother saw this announcement he resolved to abandon the army of the Conservatives. At that time he was on the staff of General Leonardo Marquez, ‘the Tiger of Tacubaya.’ Felix asked for leave of absence, and later on joined me before Oaxaca in March, 1860, when we were besieging the city under Rosas Landa. He enlisted and ever since that time served the Liberal party.”

## CHAPTER X

### DEATH GRAPPLE OF CHURCH AND STATE

WHILE the body and soul of Porfirio Diaz were being hammered out on the anvil of events in preparation for the imperious part they were to play in the practical regeneration and dominion of Mexico, civil war raged throughout the country.

It was a conflict not only between Church and State, but, in many senses, a repetition of the struggle between Cortes and the original inhabitants, with the aboriginal blood on one side and the European blood on the other. It was a struggle in which the monk appeared, cross in hand, at the head of charging troops; in which the curse of the Church was sounded from a multitude of altars; in which the treasures of centuries were torn from walls and altars, fighting Indian patriots forcing their way into dim, hallowed interiors, gleaming with gold, silver, many-colored jewels, marvelous old carvings, embroideries rivaling those of the Vatican; painted and sculptured Christs and Madonnas; gilded saints, robes heavy with incrustations of precious stones; historic shrines, beautiful and soft with the dust and tarnish of ages.

Through these scenes of ancient ecclesiastical grandeur, over the ranges of mountains and across the valleys, with their mud-walled patriot villages, massive churches and vast seignorial haciendas, moved the regu-

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lar troops and the irregular bands of the warring Church, many of them commanded by foreign adventurers, and the ragged Indian forces of the Constitutionalist government, for whom the prayers of the masses of the people were offered night and day.

Yet Juarez and his government still held the city of Vera Cruz, and although the Constitutionalist government was cut off from communication with its armies in the interior, there was a marked strategic advantage in a country without railways in having possession of the seaport leading to the national capital, the principal gateway of Mexican commerce.

Juarez was not a soldier, nor did he ever in his career assume a military function. He was always "the man in the black coat," standing unmoved and immovable for the Constitution, never doubting that the cause of the republic would ultimately succeed, and demanding from the civilized world sympathy and recognition for a nation founded on principles of justice and equality and determined to be free.

It is hard to give any accurate idea of the ferocity of the warfare which desolated Mexico. Doubtless more than 200,000 men were actually engaged in fighting, and at times the struggle became barbarous in its character. The guerrillas of the Church were pitiless and stained their arms with outright massacre. Not once did the patient Juarez give the signal for reprisals. Horrified, and at times stunned, by reports of atrocities, he insisted that the Constitutional cause, which was the cause of law, should be maintained only by civilized methods of warfare.

France, England, and Spain had recognized the usurping government at the capital; this, notwithstanding treacheries, cold-blooded butcheries, and outright

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robberies, for which the organized enemies of the republic were responsible.

The handsome and brilliant stripling Miramon and his terrible companion, General Marquez, were in full control of the Clerical forces. At the beginning of the struggle Miramon had attempted in vain to wrest Vera Cruz from Juarez, although the wretched walls of that city were scarcely a protection against ordinary bullets. While Miramon was absent from the capital, word was sent to the Liberal general, Santos Degollado, that the Liberals were ready to rise against their oppressors in the City of Mexico. Having already occupied the cities of Leon, Aquascalientes, Guanajuato, and Querétaro, Degollado advanced with 6,000 men, relying on assistance from within the capital. A powerful Clerical force, led by General Marquez, fell upon Degollado's little army at Tacubaya, in the suburbs of the capital, and the Liberals were defeated, losing all their artillery and munitions of war.

Then a fearful thing happened. The whole corps of Liberal officers, who had yielded themselves as prisoners of war, together with some medical students who were humanely attending the wounded of both armies on the battlefield, and many civilians seized in neighboring houses—all these were executed without trial. The number of men thus murdered was fifty-three. Because of this cold-blooded murder Marquez was ever afterwards known as "the Tiger of Tacubaya." He claimed that he was acting under Miramon's written order, but Miramon's partisans have always insisted that Marquez went beyond his authority when he executed civilians on the field. In any case, no one has ever dared to defend the massacre of Tacubaya.

That this crime against civilization itself was a de-

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liberate attempt to terrorize the Constitutionals into submission is shown by the order of Miramon to Marquez:

“ This afternoon, and under Your Excellency’s most strict responsibility, Your Excellency will give the order for all the prisoners holding the grade of officers to be shot, informing me of the number which have fallen under this lot.  
MIRAMON.”

Following the atrocious command, Marquez issued this proclamation:

### “ LEONARDO MARQUEZ TO THE PEOPLE OF MEXICO:

“ Know ye, that in virtue of the faculties with which I am invested, I have resolved to publish the following decree:

“ 1.—Benito Juarez, and all who have obeyed him or recognized his government, are traitors to their country, as well as all who have aided him by any means, secretly or indirectly, no matter how insignificantly.

“ 2.—All persons coming under the heads of the preceding article shall be shot immediately on their apprehension, without further investigation than the identification of their persons.  
MARQUEZ.”

Having secured \$300,000 from the Church in Mexico City, Miramon went out again with an army to capture Vera Cruz and the Juarez government. He had bought two steam vessels at Havana and armed them, so that Juarez might be simultaneously attacked by sea and land. In this hour of supreme danger Juarez turned to the commander of a squadron of the United States—that government had refused to recognize the authority of the Clerical government—and asked that the papers of

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the two armed ships should be examined. Miramon's vessels were seized by the United States, taken to New Orleans, and, being pronounced to be semipiratical, were not permitted to molest Vera Cruz. After Miramon had bombarded Vera Cruz for five days he gave up the siege and returned to the capital.

It was nearly four months after, when everything seemed dark, and when the United States alone among the great nations turned a friendly countenance upon the hard-pressed Constitutionals, that Juarez issued his famous decrees, completing the Laws of the Reforms, sweeping away every vestige of power, privilege, and wealth from the Church. This stubborn courage, shown by a full-blooded Indian civilian in the face of what seemed to be overwhelming force, blessed by the Vatican and countenanced by powerful European governments, won many wavering sympathies to the side of Juarez.

In contrast with the simple and sublime attitude of Juarez, Miramon showed himself to be a great criminal who could violate the law of nations without hesitation. Having in the summer of 1860 retired from the presidency in favor of Don José Ignacio Pavon, President of the Supreme Court of Justice, he caused that gentleman at once to appoint a committee of notables, who promptly authorized Miramon to continue in power. But by November of that year Miramon found himself in need of money. Knowing that there was a sum of \$660,000 in the British Legation in the capital, under the seal of the British minister—Juarez had deposited this money on account of the English bondholders' debt—Miramon deliberately violated the legation, broke the seals, and carried off the money.

Again, when the young military dictator needed

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funds, he turned to a Swiss adventurer in the capital, named Jecker, a pseudo-banker, and borrowed from him \$750,000 in cash, together with securities of the pretended value of \$740,000 more. In return for this small loan Miramon caused his government to issue to Jecker \$15,000,000 in bonds, payable in eight or ten years, with six per cent annual interest, a large part of these bonds being acceptable at their face value in the customhouses of Mexico.

There was nothing new in the criminal methods of the Clerical government. As early as September, 1859, Marquez seized \$600,000 at Guadalajara, which the British minister described to his government as "an act of common or uncommon highway robbery."

Nevertheless, however Miramon, Marquez, and those whom they served might dishonor their arms and discredit their pretensions before the world by undisguised robberies and assassinations, while the Constitutionalist government served its cause by honorable means, in the face of almost incredible temptations to answer barbarity with barbarity, there was a vigorous and sleepless campaign of slander carried on against Juarez and his followers throughout Europe, where a powerful and intelligent conspiracy was being formed against republican institutions in Mexico. It was even said that Juarez had bought the recognition of the United States by secretly surrendering to that government two of the northern provinces.

So relentlessly did Europe refuse to recognize or acknowledge the widely different characters and purposes of the two forces struggling for mastery in Mexico, that, in March, 1860, the British Government, through one of its naval officers, had the effrontery to tender its good offices in an attempt to reconcile the differences

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between Miramon and Juarez. A similar attempt to compromise the issues of the war was made a month later by France through its consul at Vera Cruz. So skillfully managed was this attempt to authorize European intervention—for the Clerical party had secret agents working at the principal European courts—that even Degollado, the Liberal general whose surrendered officers were murdered without a hearing at Tacubaya, was seduced into an indorsement of the cunning plan to suppress the Constitutional republic by placing the destiny of Mexico in the hands of the ministers of monarchical Europe.

Even when General Degollado disgraced the Liberal name by seizing about a million and a quarter of dollars, belonging to foreign merchants and being escorted by Constitutional soldiers from Querétaro to Tampico for shipment to Europe, notwithstanding the fact that Juarez, as soon as he heard of the robbery, ordered the stolen money returned to its owners, and afterwards, by decree, provided funds to replace all that had been lost, Degollado's stupid offense was emblazoned abroad, while the story of Juarez's prompt restitution was either suppressed or twisted into an evidence of cowardice.

From the very beginning of the struggle to overthrow Juarez, the Church had secured the active sympathy, not only of the Vatican, but of France; and Don Juan Almonte—the illegitimate son of Morelos, the patriot priest of the original war for independence—who had been Santa Anna's agent in the scandalous sale of the Mesilla country to the United States, had by the authority of Miramon and his government concluded a treaty with Spain, recognizing and validating preposterous financial claims of Spanish subjects in return for



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the support of Spain in Europe, although these very claims had been indignantly repudiated by President Comonfort.

As the Liberal army in the north grew stronger, as the results of Liberal victories in the south made themselves manifest, and the usurpers grew weaker, Miramon's government degenerated at times into downright brigandage. Forced loans were succeeded by open plundering. The Clerical leaders began to quarrel.

Then a Liberal army, under the command of General Jesus Gonzalez Ortega, recaptured Guadalajara, which had been in the hands of the Clericals since Juarez abandoned it as his capital. Miramon went forth with his forces to check the advancing Liberals, but was driven back. Finally, on December 22, 1860, there was a decisive battle fought at Calpulalpam, near the border of the state of Tlaxcala, not far from the City of Mexico. Something like 20,000 men in all took part in this memorable engagement. Miramon commanded on the one side and General Ortega on the other. Colonel Diaz, at the head of a division, made a desperate effort to reach General Ortega in time to take part in the fight. He almost wept with disappointment when he learned that the battle had been fought without him.

Miramon's army was smashed and swept from the field. Miramon himself reached the capital, but found himself powerless, as the tide had turned against him and it was impossible for him to have his authority recognized. In despair he turned over the government to the city council and fled, taking with him a large part of the money he had stolen from the British Legation. The disorders in the capital were suppressed by General Berriozabal, one of Miramon's prisoners of war, until General Ortega's arrival on Christmas day. Then, on

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the first day of 1861, 28,000 Constitutionalist soldiers marched into the City of Mexico and took possession. A great popular ovation awaited Juarez and his ministers when they entered the capital on January 11, 1861.

Among the first acts of President Juarez after he reached the capital was the expulsion from Mexico of the ministers of Spain, Guatemala, and Ecuador, and the papal nuncio, Monsignor Clementi. He also exiled two archbishops and four bishops. The President reorganized the Cabinet, but Melchor Ocampo, his minister of the interior, not agreeing with Juarez's policy, resigned and withdrew to his hacienda in the state of Michoacan, where he was surprised in June by a guerrilla band and murdered by the command of Marquez.

On March 9, 1861, the Congress declared Juarez to be the Constitutional President for the term ending November 8, 1865.

By authority of the Congress, Santos Degollado went out with a slender column to find the slayers of Ocampo, but he was captured by the guerrillas and executed thirteen days after the death of Ocampo in the same place at Monte de las Cruces. Don Leandro Valle was also defeated, taken prisoner, and executed by Marquez on the same spot where Degollado was slain. But the bushwhacking forces of Marquez were repeatedly punished by Liberal generals.

## CHAPTER XI

### DIAZ IN A TALKATIVE CONGRESS

JUAREZ had won his great fight for the disestablishment of the Church, but Mexico was not yet a nation, save in name. Europe laughed at him as he struggled with a noisy, jealous, and obstructive Congress in the midst of a land almost without commerce, industry, or credit, swarming everywhere with bandits and kidnapers, and still vexed in the mountains by armed raiders under Marquez, Cobos, and Tomas Mejia.

The chaotic condition of the country was reflected in the blatherskite clamor of the deputies, who quarreled day after day with each other and with the President. The reactionary elements, defeated in the field; the various states, accustomed to regard themselves as absolute sovereignties; the intriguants of foreign governments, and the extreme radicals, pressing for violent measures—all found direct or indirect voices in the Congress, fifty-one of whose deputies actually signed a petition asking Juarez to retire from his office, although the remarkable proposal was denounced by the governors and legislatures of all the states.

In this extraordinary law-making body, where traitors and patriots wrangled in debate, sat Porfirio Diaz, who had been elected to represent the district of Ixtlan, whose slovenly Indian mountaineers he had drilled and

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led in battle many times. He had discarded his uniform for the frock coat and top hat of a legislator, but no one could mistake him for one of the breed of politicians. The Oaxacan had partly recovered from his wounds, and although the ravages of typhus fever had thinned his body, the erect figure, square jaws, lionlike eyes, and stern bearing marked him as a leader who would yet have to be reckoned with.

In his long career of military victories and constructive statesmanship, Diaz has always shown a contemptuous dislike for legislative babbling. This aversion to the favorite activity of the Latin-American politician originated, beyond doubt, in the Mexican Congress of 1861; where Diaz saw his colleagues wantonly confusing and destroying the executive power of the government in a situation which called for concentrated authority backed by force, while the galleries rang with laughter and applause.

Juarez seemed to have little influence in Congress. One of the deputies, Don Ignacio Altamirano, a pure-blooded Indian and famous as a Mexican author, arose in his place, and, referring to Juarez's attempt to procure peace by an amnesty, stirred the crowd in the galleries when he boldly said:

“Señor Juarez feels and loves the democratic ideals, but I fear that he does not understand them; and the reason why I fear this is that he does not show himself capable of vigorous, sustained, and energetic action, such as present circumstances demand [the government was understood to favor a law of amnesty]. We need another sort of man in the Presidency. The greatest service which the President could render to his country would be to resign, for he is an obstacle to the progress of democracy.”

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Diaz listened to the orator in silence, but there came into his face a grim look, long afterwards remembered by his companions.

While the Congress was in session on the afternoon of June 25, 1861, a band of Conservative guerrillas, led by General Tomas Mejia, boldly attacked the capital in the San Cosmé quarter. The deputies were in the midst of another oratorical attack on Juarez.

Old Don Juan A. Mateos leaped to his feet and cried out :

“ A debate at the moment when the capital is being attacked, when General Valle swings on a rope on the Toluca road, and when we, the representatives of the people, may soon be swinging from the lamp posts in the plaza with the Constitution tied around our necks, is improper ; and, therefore, I propose that the session shall close.”

At this, another deputy stood up. “ Let us wait here to receive the enemy like the Roman senators,” he said.

Here Diaz arose. His enthusiastic biographers declare that he stretched out his hands, lifted up his eyes, and in a voice thrilling with emotion shouted : “ I am a soldier before all else, and I wish to leave the Chamber to take up arms.” The truth is that he stood up very quietly and said in a low voice to the Speaker of the Chamber : “ I am a soldier, and I beg permission to leave the house.” The Speaker granted permission and Diaz left the Chamber, accompanied by Colonel Salinas and another deputy from Oaxaca.

Some of the biographers also tell a fanciful tale of how Diaz led a body of troops through the capital and after a fierce battle routed the guerrillas with great loss. The simple facts are that when Diaz reached his hotel

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his manservant appeared with a rifle, and Diaz ran on foot in the direction of the firing, while his servant went for a horse. When he reached the Church of San Fernando, he found that the Oaxaca brigade, which was quartered there, had repulsed the enemy. Then his servant overtook him with a horse, rifle, and belt of ammunition. Diaz mounted the horse, still wearing his frock coat and tall silk hat. His old wound prevented him from wearing the cartridges about his waist, so he strapped the belt over his shoulder, and, rifle in hand, started for the front; but the enemy was in full retreat. He could only catch a distant glimpse of the fighting. Later on he rode back to his hotel, still wearing his frock coat and high silk hat, with rifle and cartridge belt unused.

This raid into the city was a mere feint ordered by Marquez, whose real object was to protect a column of his troops moving southward in the neighborhood of the capital.

The scenes in Congress grew worse and worse. It was nothing to the loose-tongued politicians that their country was overwhelmed with debts, that the roads from one end of Mexico to the other were given over to cutthroats and robbers, that great nations were threateningly demanding the payment of extortionate claims, and that Juarez, worn by his three years' ordeal of civil war, was almost crushed by the weight of his responsibilities—among others the necessity of governing a turbulent, demoralized nation, with an empty treasury, and the national credit shattered. While the deputies baited and insulted the President, the loafers crowding the gallery hissed, applauded, or taunted the friends of the administration as though they were in a theater, circus, or bull ring.

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It is easy to understand how a strong, simple, and sincere character like Diaz chafed in such exasperating surroundings. On June 28th he showed his attitude by obtaining permission from the Chamber to take up his work as a soldier again.

Even before that, he had quitted the company of the schemers and talkers in the capital, and, once more in uniform, the future President of Mexico, not yet thirty-one years old, had led his Oaxaca brigade into the district of Monte de las Cruces, an old haunt of bandits, now infested by the enemy's guerrillas, who had sorely tormented the country. He surprised and scattered the guerrillas and thoroughly cleaned out the district.

Having obtained leave from the Chamber, Diaz took 230 of his Oaxacan troops, the very men he had transformed into soldiers in the Zapotec mountains, and went with the division of General Ortega, the hero of Calpulalpam, to look for Marquez, "the Tiger of Tacubaya."

With this small force of his loyal Oaxacans and a reserve of Zacatecans, Diaz attacked the forces of Marquez at the village of Jalatlaco. He thoroughly understood the cunning and fierceness of Marquez, and, resorting to his usual tactics, he made the assault on Jalatlaco before daylight on August 13th. Most of the enemy were asleep in the village churchyard when Diaz's men broke in on them. Diaz himself rode in front of his force, and so complete was the movement that, after a skirmish in the streets, the valiant Marquez fled. Diaz took more than 700 prisoners and 10 cannon. General Ortega was so much pleased by this victory of the young colonel over Marquez that he folded Diaz in his arms and promptly wrote a letter on a drumhead, asking the President to promote him to the rank of brigadier-general. Ignacio Mejia, who was jealous of Diaz, at-

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tempted to dissuade Juarez from granting this honor, urging that such a high rank conferred on one so young would anger older officers serving in lower grades. But the President, nevertheless, issued the commission.

After the battle of Jalatlaco the 18 officers who had been taken in the action were pinioned, and the rank and file of the prisoners, more than 700, were made to lie down in the churchyard with their faces toward the ground. General Carbajal, who was Diaz's superior, wanted to shoot the 18 helpless officers and drew his pistol for that purpose. With a cry of indignation, Diaz wrested the pistol from the general's hand, and, his eyes flaming with anger, he ordered the would-be slayer of the prisoners to leave the churchyard. So great was his horror of such an act that he did not make a report of the battle to Carbajal, but directly to the commander in chief, General Ortega.

This incident was the cause of strained relations between Carbajal and Diaz.

"One day I was at Pachuca," says President Diaz, "and, entering a small restaurant, I there found some of Carbajal's officers, including Carbajal himself. They had finished eating and were amusing themselves by pelting one another with pellets of bread. One even threw the contents of a pulque glass at a comrade seated with me at a table in the center of the room. Some of the pulque splattered near my plate. This exhausted my patience and I drew my pistol and examined it. Then Carbajal spoke up, saying, 'Comrade, you don't seem to like this fun of the boys.' I answered, 'Oh, I don't know, but don't be surprised, if they continue throwing pellets of bread, if I diversify the proceedings a little by shooting about a few pellets of lead.' Just then General Traconis, who had been seated in a corner of the room, and whom I had not seen, came up to me,



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saying, 'Porfirio, I'm with you. They are a pack of ruffians.' The officers thus referred to made no reply. and soon after both they and Carbajal slunk out of the restaurant."

In that high, soldierly temper Diaz returned to his place in the Congress. Here, again, he had to endure the antics of the kind of men who vibrate but do not think. One of the most responsible of those who have undertaken to chronicle the hero's experiences in the Congress declares that it was then that Diaz realized the intellectual vacuity of that type, half politician and half actor, so common in the public assemblies of the Latin countries, the man of attitudes, of telling phrases. "He gesticulates, thunders, and weeps. He is a big mechanical doll. His flow of words is addressed as much to the gallery as to the members." In the Congress of 1861 this phenomenon was to be seen in an acute form. The orators not only apostrophized the gallery, but entered into discussion with it. Sometimes the gallery got beyond control and imposed its will on the Chamber.

The mastery of Diaz's work as a ruler, the world-wide acknowledgment of his capacity as a nation-maker, and the evidence to be found in the peace and prosperity of his country under the firm direction which he is able to give to it, even in his eightieth year, lends a singular importance to every political or governmental experience that influenced the mind and character of this supremely great Latin-American leader at a time when he must have concentrated all his powers of observation and summoned all his intelligence in an attempt to study the science of government in a country where effective government had almost ceased to exist.

It galled the veteran of so many battlefields to hear

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his victory at Jalatlaco made the subject of jokes and jeers in the gallery. It stung his soldierly pride that he had to sit in his place and listen to the scurrilous demonstrations of idle rowdies or the vapid mouthings of conceited and treacherous politicians. He began to stay away from the sessions of the Congress, and the monkey-brained gallery noticed his sensitiveness.

One day there was a very stormy session of the Chamber, which is described in contemporary accounts. The Minister of Finance got up and said that he despised Señor Altamirano. Señor Altamirano, poet and essayist, arose and said that he despised the Minister of Finance. A storm of passionate noise broke loose. The Speaker of the Chamber put on his hat and left his desk. The Secretary of the Chamber approached the desk and rang violently for order. Many deputies arose and shouted, "We have no liberty!" "This is coercion!" "This is intolerable!" One of the deputies asked that it be recorded that he and his friends withdrew because they had no freedom. A hurricane of howls, catcalls, and whistling came from the gallery.

Then it was found that there were ten members lacking for a quorum. One of the deputies shouted:

"It is only the deputies from Oaxaca that are absent. Their substitutes should be called for."

In answer to this fling at Diaz and his friends, Justo Benitez, a lawyer who had gone to school with Diaz and was regarded as his foster-brother, jumped to his feet and said in a voice vibrating with indignation:

"It is not true that all the deputies from Oaxaca are absent; nor has anyone the right to villify those of them who are absent or those who are present. Both have done their duty to the republic, not only in the

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Federal Congress, but in the darkest days of the Liberal cause."

Another deputy, Peña y Ramirez, said:

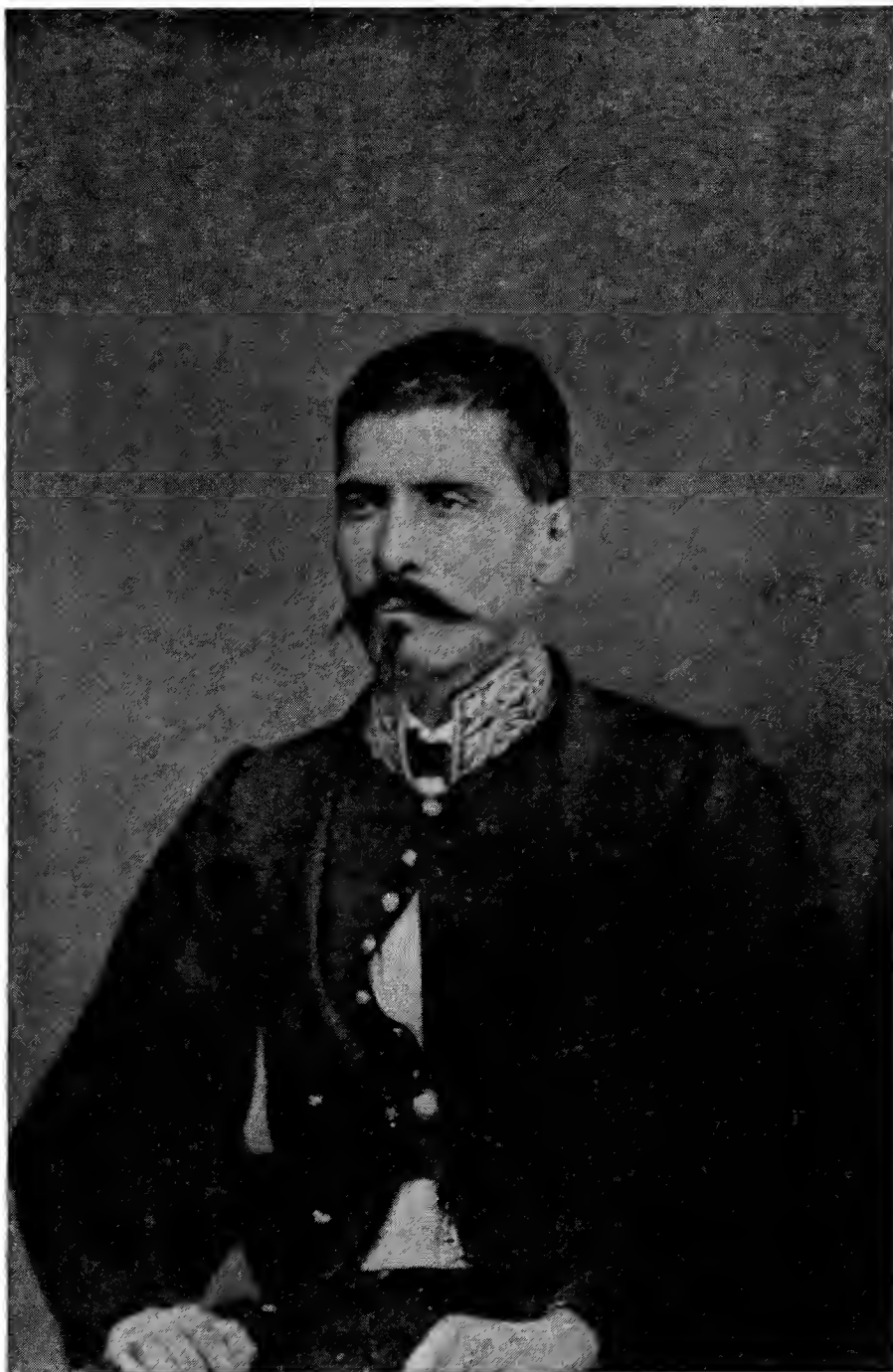
"I propose that the absentees be sent for, which is the only legal way of putting an end to this scandal. Let those who have deserted, on the plea that the innocent demonstrations of the gallery deprived them of liberty, be forced to return."

Again Justo Benitez took the floor. "The chamber," he said, "should not regard as a slight the absence of a deserving group of citizens who have vacated their seats because they believe that the public is exercising undue pressure upon the debates of this assembly" [hoots and hisses from the gallery].

Turning to the leering, noisy rabble in the gallery, which was amusing itself by deriding the absent Oaxaca patriots, Benitez addressed the ruffians.

"Which of you," he exclaimed, "is in a position to address a reproach to Generals Salinas and Diaz? Which of you has defeated Cobos again and again on the battlefields of Oaxaca? Which of you has given to your country a victory like that of Jalatlaco?"

Diaz did not return to his seat in the Congress. He had heard the voice of an undeveloped people, whose majority was drawn anciently from Oriental bloods, called to self-government under an Anglo-Saxon Constitution. He had witnessed the working out of the common Mexican temperament and capacity in conditions of unrestrained democracy. He had understood at last that the apish demagogue, false, empty, but with the gift of dramatic word and gesture, was a commanding hero in the eyes of the sovereign people, as he poured out a flood of meaningless but exciting rhetoric about



DIAZ AT THE AGE OF THIRTY-ONE YEARS, JUST AFTER HIS VICTORY  
OVER MARQUEZ AT JALATLACO.

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the rights of man; while the great Juarez, still hypnotized by the idea that constitutions and laws can in themselves produce power, was rendered helpless in his executive authority by elements having only the inert force of numbers, the down-drawing strength of the quicksand. Democratic forms had not made a nation of the unhappy Mexican people.

But it was not in General Diaz to be idle. With his Oaxacan brigade he joined the forces of General Santiago Tapia, preparing to fight General Marquez, who, with the remnants of his army saved from Jalatlaco and reinforcements recruited from Querétaro and San Luis Potosi, had made a stand at Pachuca. Diaz acted as chief of staff. He made a forced march and on October 20, 1861, drove Marquez from the city. The terrible guerrilla general retreated by a road leading to Mineral del Monte and took possession of three hills. Diaz was ordered to attack these hills. It was a bloody battle, but Diaz swept Marquez and his forces from their positions, capturing much of their artillery. He pursued the enemy for some distance and went back to Mineral del Monte, spending four or five days burying the dead and taking care of the wounded. Then he returned to the City of Mexico—but not to the Congress.

Even in those days Juarez seemed to see the nimbus of a high destiny about the form of the young Oaxaca general. Soon after the battle of Jalatlaco a number of army officers visited the President in the national palace, among them Diaz. It was an interesting night scene. The Indian statesman sat at a table in his black coat, the lamplight glowing on his earnest, swarthy face, and sparkling on the buttons, gold lace, and sword hilts of the officers, who pressed eagerly around him and sued for his attention. Diaz stood apart, silent, his hand on

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his sword hilt. He had just won an important battle and had gained the rank of general, but there was no vanity in his bearing. He seemed more sober, more reserved than ever.

Turning from the eager throng surrounding him, the President pointed to Diaz and said slowly, with a look of marked significance in his bright black eyes: "Do you see that young man who stands there alone and without a word? He will be my successor!"

Don Felix Romero, now the venerable President of the Supreme Court of Justice, was present in the room when Juarez uttered this prophecy. He says that the President spoke in a loud, clear voice, as though it were his intention that Diaz should hear his words. The victor of Jalatlaco remained motionless, with a look of impenetrable reserve on his weather-beaten countenance.

## CHAPTER XII

### NAPOLEON PLANS A MEXICAN EMPIRE

OF all events in the bewildering history of Mexico, there is nothing more romantic than the bloody attempt of Napoleon III to establish an empire on the ruins of Mexican democracy, with the blond, dreamy, and youthful Austrian Archduke Maximilian as his crowned puppet.

The story of this mad adventure of an ambitious and treacherous monarch, filled with a desire to win historic glory by the partial or complete conquest of America, forms the tragic threshold through which Porfirio Diaz made his entry upon a grander stage of service to his distracted country.

In vain were the thundering of Napoleon's artillery, the shouting of his armies, the rushes of French and Austrian bayonets, the thousands slain on hundreds of battlefields, the deliberate murder of prisoners of war; and, in the midst of it, the blue-eyed, fair-bearded, sentimental prince, with his beautiful young wife, the daughter of a king, attempting to seduce Mexico from the love of liberty by the tinsel show of a monarchical court. The half-starved Indian troops, led by heroes like Diaz, fought through years of defeat, till in the end imperial Maximilian died by patriot Mexican hands and all the world acknowledged the independence of the republic.

It must be remembered that in 1840 an able and elo-

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quent Mexican named Gutierrez de Estrada, who had served in the Cabinet of President Comonfort in 1835, had been forced to fly abroad to escape the fury of his countrymen because he had dared publicly to point to the general disorder, repeated wars, increasing poverty, prolonged political chaos, and appalling social demoralization as conclusive proofs that the people of Mexico were unsuited to democratic institutions, and that the republican Constitution adopted by the patriotic but inexperienced Mexicans of 1824 was a ghastly mistake.

Gutierrez de Estrada insisted that the history of the country and its various races furnished a complete demonstration that the Mexican population was incapable of making progress except under a crowned ruler. Without monarchy the nation would disintegrate. Democratic government was a natural outcome of Anglo-Saxon thought, and under its influence the people of the United States had grown in power. But the very system that produced strength, unity, and order in the northern republic, had steadily divided and weakened Mexico, whose masses could never understand democratic institutions. Unless the Constitution were abandoned and a monarchy ordained, Mexico would become weaker and weaker and the United States stronger and stronger, until the Mexicans would be subjugated and absorbed by the greater nation.

It is difficult for a Mexican to hear calmly even a modified explanation of Gutierrez de Estrada's motives in that time of black political anarchy. The fact that he afterwards helped a foreign armed invasion of his country has covered his name with infamy. Yet, aside from his advocacy of kingship, there was much truth and hard sense in what he had to say about the effects of the attempt, suddenly and without intermediate preparation, to



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thrust upon the politically unripe peoples descended from the slavish masses of American aboriginals the trying, and sometimes stupefying, responsibilities of self-government. Seven years afterwards he was able to point to the flag of the United States, raised by an American army over Chapultepec Castle, as a partial confirmation of his words.

After leaving Mexico in 1840 this eloquent and energetic man wandered about Europe and carried on in the principal capitals a never-resting propaganda against the Mexican republic. He was a man of much learning. The grace of his person, his intellectual fineness, and the charm of his social and political address, together with his powerful church connections, enabled him to enter some of the most exalted and exclusive circles in the foremost cities of Europe. For twenty years he devoted his whole time to an agitation in favor of a reigning prince for Mexico. The dream was with him always and everywhere. It ran in his blood.

No man could have worked so long and so faithfully for a single purpose unless he were sincere. Even President Diaz, in the calmness of his old age, has said, "Gutierrez de Estrada became a traitor to his country out of patriotic motives."

In time the self-exile married into the family of Prince Metternich, the powerful Austrian prime minister. That, in time, gave him an access even to the most secret and influential forces of the Austrian imperial court that was eventually to work out tragically for Mexico.

While President Juarez struggled with an empty treasury and a garrulous, antagonistic Congress, the fugitive leaders and agents of the defeated Conservative Party were at work throughout Europe. Beaten on the battlefield, their one hope was in foreign intervention. Mira-

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mon, Almonte, La Bastida, Archbishop of Mexico, and Gutierrez de Estrada were in Paris, and as they worked on the unscrupulous mind of Napoleon III, other reactionary Mexicans pleaded their cause with the Pope in Rome.

The selfish and perfidious monarch who betrayed the French republic he had sworn to serve, and by treason to a whole nation set an imperial crown on his perjured head, listened gladly to the conspirators when they declared that Mexico was "monarchical to the core." Thirsting for military glory and power, Napoleon's mind was filled with a vision of conquest in America.

Mexico was poor and exhausted by war. Her ravaged people, tired of the weakness and dissension of democracy, would gladly turn to the iron peace of a strong monarchy. All Catholic nations would welcome the subjugation of the republic which had stripped the Church of its wealth and privileges. Great Britain, France, and Spain were already pressing Mexico for the payment of debts and claims. President Juarez, harassed by a hostile and foolish Congress, had no money with which to satisfy the demands of foreign creditors. The loose talk about European intervention to save Mexico from utter anarchy was assuming more definite form.

Napoleon's soul took fire. He would revive the terrible prestige of the Bonaparte name. He would be the first to overthrow the arrogant Monroe Doctrine through which the United States had defied the Holy Alliance to meddle with the free nations of America, and but for which the Latin-American republics would have been destroyed long ago and their peoples and lands restored to the rule of European kings. The great Anglo-Saxon republic which had so boldly challenged continental Europe in 1823, was now on the brink of a civil war.

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Abraham Lincoln had been elected President of the United States, and the slaveholding Southern States had seceded from the Union, seizing the forts, arsenals, customhouses, mints, and courthouses of the nation. Bloodshed could yet be averted by Lincoln, but when once the American people were riven by actual war, Mexico might be occupied with impunity, and the way opened up, perhaps, for the Latin conquest of the American hemisphere.

That would be the last of republican government on earth. It was a dream that suited the imperial gambler's sordid ambition. Alas, what shadows the plans of even emperors and popes may be! The intervention in Mexico ultimately drove Napoleon from his throne to an exile's grave, and the withdrawal of Napoleon's support from Pius IX enabled Victor Emmanuel to seize Rome and strip the Pope of his temporal power.

While Napoleon was waiting for the ripening of events, the Mexican Congress authorized a presidential decree suspending all payments on the foreign debt for two years.

It is said that this stupid and apparently shameful act was inspired by the powerful deputy Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada (afterwards Juarez's principal minister and successor), and was in opposition to the President's wishes. However that may be, it is a fact that on July 17, 1861, Juarez proclaimed the national bankruptcy of Mexico.

It was a stroke of madness at such a time. Three weeks before, Sir Charles Wyke, the British Minister, had advised his government that nothing but a naval demonstration in the ports of Tampico and Vera Cruz would bring the Mexicans to reason. Now, without a word of notice to the British Minister, and while still negotiating with him regarding the foreign debt, Mexico had suddenly announced her absolute insolvency.

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Napoleon was at breakfast when he received a telegram reporting the action of the Mexican Congress. At the same time he received a telegram from the French Minister at Washington conveying the news that President Lincoln had ordered the Federal army to move on the Confederate forces in Virginia. The Emperor read the telegrams in silence and handed them across the table to Almonte, the principal agent of the Mexican Conservatives. As he passed Almonte, Napoleon leaned down and whispered in his ear, "The hour has struck!"

Great Britain, France, and Spain, ignoring the cruel poverty of Mexico and the heroic efforts of Juarez to restore order to his country, broke off diplomatic relations with the republic. The three creditor nations, principally at the suggestion of Napoleon, signed a convention in London on October 31, 1861, agreeing to seize jointly fortresses on the Mexican coast, take possession of the customs revenues, and arrange a commission to settle their debts. It is impossible to say whether, even then, the British Foreign Minister, Lord John Russell, suspected the brutal scheme of conquest in the mind of Napoleon; but under British influence it was solemnly set forth in the contract that none of the allies desired to acquire any part of the soil of Mexico, or to interfere with the Mexican government in its own affairs.

Unhappy Mexico! Even the United States, already in the first throes of the great Civil War, foresaw the peril of the foreign invasion of the sister republic. President Lincoln's government proposed to Juarez that the whole of the Mexican foreign debt, about \$82,000,000, should be assumed by the United States and that the soil of Lower California and Sonora should be pledged for the repayment of the money within five years. But no Mexican statesman would dare, under such circum-

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stances, to pawn 140,000 square miles of the national territory in the hands of the powerful neighbor who had already absorbed so much of the country, and the offer was promptly declined.

The united squadrons of the allies arrived at Vera Cruz in December, 1861, and January, 1862. The British carried no army and had merely 700 marines as a guard of honor for their representative. The Spanish were accompanied by 5,700 troops and 300 horses, and their 16 war ships cleared for action as they reached Vera Cruz and compelled the fortress of San Juan de Ulloa to surrender. The French squadron was provided with an army of 6,000 men, prepared for a serious military campaign.

Of the \$82,000,000 foreign debt that formed the pretext for the appearance of this formidable fleet, only about \$2,600,000 was due to France and \$9,400,000 to Spain, while the great bulk of the money, \$70,000,000, was owed to Great Britain, whose squadron was without soldiers.

In vain had President Juarez made an agreement on the foreign debt that would have satisfied Great Britain and Spain. The Congress promptly rejected it.

Whatever may be said as to the conduct of Great Britain and Spain, it is certain that Napoleon III entered upon this debt-collecting, peace-restoring enterprise with a deliberate intention of effecting the armed conquest of Mexico. The French claims were absolutely indefensible and were pressed with an arrogant refusal to specify details or furnish evidence of any kind that made it impossible for any self-respecting government to recognize them.

Napoleon insisted that the Jecker bonds, amounting to \$15,000,000, should be paid in full, although they had been issued in return for \$750,000 cash by Miramon at

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the very time when he was attempting to destroy the Constitutional government of Juarez. Besides, it was shown that Jecker's nationality was Swiss and that he had only become a French citizen in order to make his outrageous claims a part of the excuse for Napoleon's action.

Even Lord Russell, when he considered the French pretensions, was compelled to write this admission:

"It is hardly possible that claims so excessive as that of \$12,000,000 in the lump, without an account, and that of \$15,000,000 for \$750,000 actually received, can have been put forward with an expectation that they would be complied with."

Not only that—Napoleon's bastard brother, the Duc de Morny, was financially interested in the collection of Jecker's claim—but the British, who in many respects showed a reasonable disposition, actually demanded that President Juarez's government should fully repay the money stolen by Miramon from the British Legation in Mexico.

The three commanders of the allied forces—Admiral de la Gravière, representing France; Commodore Dunlop, representing Great Britain; and General Prim, representing Spain—issued at Vera Cruz a proclamation to the Mexican nation, declaring that their respective forces had come to demand the fulfillment of treaties, and for the purpose of enabling Mexico, under their protection, to choose a strong government that would put an end to the anarchy that had prevailed.

Sir Charles Wyke had, unconsciously perhaps, prepared the British Government to fall into Napoleon's carefully laid trap by such alarming descriptions of Mexico as the following:

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“Congress, instead of enabling the government to put down the frightful disorder which reigns throughout the length and breadth of the land, is occupied in disputing about vain theories of so-called government on ultra-Liberal principles, whilst the respectable part of the population is delivered up defenseless to the attacks of robbers and assassins, who swarm on the high roads and in the streets of the capital. Patriotism, in the common acceptation of the term, appears to be unknown, and no one of any note is to be found in the ranks of either party. Contending factions struggle for the possession of power only to gratify their cupidity or their revenge, and in the meantime the country sinks lower and lower, whilst its population becomes brutalized and degraded to an extent frightful to contemplate.”

A comparison of this situation with the sober and fruitful conditions which followed the masterful executive policy of President Diaz should be instructive to all serious students of government.

The commanders of the foreign squadrons communicated with President Juarez's government, which declared that it would try to meet their demands if the forces were withdrawn. Presently Miramon returned to Mexico and attempted to land with a party of conspirators, his purpose being to head a revolution against the republic. But that was too much for the British, whose legation he had once openly violated and robbed. Commodore Dunlop, in the teeth of a protest by the French representatives, arrested Miramon and sent him on a war ship to Havana. That was Napoleon's first check.

After some negotiation, the commissioners of France, Great Britain, and Spain met in conference with the representatives of the republic at La Soledad, near Vera Cruz, on February 19, 1862, and signed a treaty to cover further negotiations.

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Because of the deadly climate of the coast, permission was granted to the foreign soldiers already landed to retire to the high land of Orizaba, which was within the Mexican defenses of Chiquihuite; but it was agreed that these troops should retire to the coast if the negotiations should be broken off.

Napoleon was impatient to develop the great crime he had planned. Anything like an attempt to deal with the Mexican republic in good faith might defeat the scheme of armed subjugation which he had planned. On March 1, 1861, General de Lorencez arrived from France with reinforcements of troops. At the same time, General Juan N. Almonte, the illegitimate son of the martyred patriot Morelos, who had represented the defeated Conservatives in Paris, and had been planning with Napoleon the establishment of an empire in Mexico, arrived in Vera Cruz and with him Padre Miranda, one of the most infamous figures in the Clerical war against the republic. Miranda was openly received by the French admiral and lived in his headquarters at Orizaba. In spite of the united protests of President Juarez and the British representatives, the traitor Almonte was allowed by General de Lorencez to go to Orizaba under his protection; and there he at once became the center of the Conservative plotters against the republic, the meetings of the conspirators being publicly countenanced both by the French commissioner and the French commander in chief.

This gross treachery to the solemn agreements of London and La Soledad, persisted in by France against the remonstrances of her allies, compelled Great Britain and Spain to declare that the tripartite agreement was at an end. Thereupon the British and Spanish forces withdrew, leaving the French flag flying alone over the fortress of San Juan de Ulloa. General de Lorencez added



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to Napoleon's perfidy and further violated the convention of La Soledad by starting from Cordoba to Orizaba with troops, under the pretext that he had to protect 340 French soldiers said to be sick at that place. The criminal purpose which governed Napoleon while his representatives were pretending to negotiate with the distressed republic can be judged by General de Lorencez's candid dispatch to his government:

"We possess over the Mexicans such a superiority of race, organization, discipline, morality and elevation of sentiment, that I entreat Your Excellency to tell the Emperor that from this moment, at the head of his six thousand soldiers, I am the master of Mexico."

The British Foreign Minister explained the situation when he wrote: "The principle of non-intervention having been always maintained by the English government, our force was withdrawn and our flag hauled down upon the express determination of Admiral de la Gravière and M. Saligny to march to Mexico for the purpose of overthrowing the government of President Juarez."

The French mask having been thrown aside and Napoleon having revealed himself as a shameless adventurer bent upon the spoliation of the apparently helpless republic, President Juarez called upon every Mexican between the ages of twenty and sixty years to take up arms for the defense of his country.

There is nothing finer in human history than the response which the impoverished descendants of the prehistoric Mexican peoples made to this call of their undaunted Zapotec leader. Whatever may be said of the political fitness or unfitness for self-government of the masses of Mexico, they have given abundant proof of their willingness to fight and to die for national inde-

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pendence, even when liberty has meant only license to war against each other afterwards. No thoughtful man can read Mexican history without being awe-struck by the capacity of the Mexican people for suffering, and their fighting resiliency, in spite of oppressions and defeats.

The war call of Mexico to her battle-worn sons was made at a time when the imperial dastard of France seemed to have at his mercy an absolutely helpless victim. His first volleys were fired when the United States was powerless to resist violations of the Monroe Doctrine. The battle of Shiloh had been fought, with 10,000 killed and wounded; the *Merrimac* and the *Monitor* had met; Farragut's fleet was forcing its way to the mouth of the Mississippi against the roaring guns of the Confederacy. No outside help could be looked for. The Mexican people alone, with traitors seeking to divide their force, must resist the heartless master of continental Europe, behind whom stood the Pope and other forces, as yet suspected, but not clearly seen.

The army of 10,000 Mexicans organized to meet the invaders was at first commanded by General José Lopez Uruga, but when that officer declared that it was impossible to make an effective defense against the European troops, he was instantly relieved and the command was given to General Ignacio Zaragoza, a lawyer turned soldier. Porfirio Diaz served in the army as a brigadier-general in the first division of this army and had immediate command of the second brigade.

The French army began hostilities on April 19, 1862, when General de Lorencez with a body of troops left Cordoba for Orizaba, in violation of the agreement with Mexico, his pretext being that he must protect the sick of his army at Orizaba. As a matter of fact, the French soldiers at Orizaba were not in the slightest danger, nor

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had the Mexicans shown any disposition to molest them. Nevertheless, General de Lorencez before starting out, harangued his soldiers, saying :

“Soldiers! let us march to the relief of our comrades to the cry of ‘Vive l’Empereur!’”

General Diaz with the van of the Mexican army occupied an advanced position on the plain of Escamela. His mission was peacefully to take possession of Orizaba after the French and Spanish troops left the place. No treachery was suspected.

Little dreaming of what was to occur, General Diaz sent his brother, Lieutenant-Colonel Felix Diaz, with fifty cavalrymen, to watch the movements of the foreign troops.

“When the rear of the enemy was arriving at Cordoba,” says President Diaz, “200 French cavalrymen, with a zouave seated behind each horseman, was detached from the main body, and suddenly turning around, closed with the observation party which I had sent out. Our soldiers defended themselves heroically, many being killed, and their commander [Felix Diaz] wounded in the breast and taken prisoner.

“A few moments after this skirmish the Countess of Reus [General Prim’s wife] passed the spot, being carried in a litter on her way to Vera Cruz, with an escort of Spanish troops. On being informed of what had taken place, she made a vigorous plea for the release of the prisoners, as did also General Milan del Bosch, Chief of Staff to General Prim. Lieutenant-Colonel Diaz, taking advantage of a moment of distraction on the part of his French captors, vaulted to the back of his horse, which was still near him, jumped over a wall along the roadside, and disappeared in the woods without being hit by the French volleys. Two days later he joined me at Acultzingo, having gone around by the Mount Orizaba road.”

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General Diaz gallantly attacked the French forces who had so treacherously begun the war without notice, but was ordered to retire by General Zaragoza, and was then sent with his men to Acultzingo.

Two days after his arrival at Acultzingo he marched with his brigade to Tehuacan, where two other brigades were placed under his orders and he was instructed to advance toward Matamoras Izucar, in the state of Puebla, to intercept the troops of the traitorous Marquez, "the Tacubaya Tiger," who was advancing in that neighborhood to join the foreign invaders. Diaz had actually moved out with his army toward Matamoras, but on reaching Tlacotepec he received word that the French were moving upon Acultzingo, and he was ordered to face about with all speed and join General Zaragoza at that place.

The hero of Oaxaca had had the honor of replying to the first fire of the invaders. His coolness and energy afterwards saved the Mexican forces from disgrace. Having under General Zaragoza's orders undertaken to defend a bridge on the wagon road along which the French army was advancing toward Acultzingo, he noticed that part of the Mexican forces, apparently overwhelmed by nervousness, had begun to retreat in disorder. The general had just placed himself at the head of his own brigade when he saw the multitude of flying Mexicans. Drawing his sword, he moved out on the bridge and checked the flight, sending the fugitives in bodies of 500 each up the Ixtapa ravine under the orders of officers whom he selected from among the fugitives themselves.

Hardly had Diaz placed his forces in fighting position and opened a terrific fire on the vanguard of the French, when General Zaragoza ordered him to retreat along the Ixtapa ravine. He carried out this movement at ten

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o'clock at night, leaving behind him bodies of sharpshooters to prevent a surprise in the rear, and withdrawing them gradually as he fell back. On the next day General Zaragoza ordered his forces to march to the city of Puebla, where they arrived on May 3d. On that day also the French invaders arrived at Amozoc, within striking distance of Puebla. Two days later the famous battle of the Fifth of May was fought, and the world learned that Napoleon III had undertaken a larger and longer task than he had imagined.

It was on the very day when General Diaz arrested the flight of Mexican troops at Acultzingo and for the second time boldly engaged the van of the invaders, that Almonte, the Mexican traitor, under the open protection of the French army at Orizaba, proclaimed himself President, Supreme Ruler of the Mexican nation, and Commander in Chief of the National Armies, issuing a proclamation in which he called upon the Mexican people to welcome "the beneficent and civilizing influence of the illustrious sovereign of France."

Thus, the illegitimate son of the patriot priest Morelos, who died that the Mexican republic might live, trampled upon his father's grave. And yet Morelos had made great sacrifices in order that his son might be reared in the love of liberty. When the priest, who led the struggle for Mexican independence after the execution of Hidalgo, was brought before the Inquisition for trial, he was questioned about his son. All through the terrible fighting against Spain, Morelos had carried the boy with him. When a battle was imminent, he would kiss his little son, place him in the hands of a guard, and cry, "Al monte!" ("To the mountain!"). When he stood before his inquisitors, with certain death awaiting him, it developed that he had sent his son to a school in New Orleans.

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“ You have sent your son to the United States to be educated in the religion of the Protestants—you are a heretic,” said one of the inquisitors.

“ No,” answered Morelos with a shining face, “ I have sent my boy to New Orleans to be educated because in the colleges of this colony he would not have imbibed the principles of liberty, nor have acquired that temper which inspires men with noble sentiments and leads them to sacrifice all things for the independence of their country.”

It was this son, so destined by his hero-father, who called upon his countrymen to help a foreign army to destroy the Constitutional republic of Mexico, promising that Marquez, Miramon, Mejia, Zuloaga, and other traitors would join in the assault upon Juarez’s government, with the blessing of the Church.

General Diaz made a dramatic reply to Almonte when he named his favorite battalion of Oaxacans the Battalion Morelos, and in the proclamation with which he gave the colors to the battalion, said :

“ Our flag waving in victory, or our dead bodies lying under its sheltering folds, will be the best testimony we can give to the world that we are worthy sons of Morelos, in contrast with the monster [Almonte] who impiously lifts his hand against his country and the honor of his illustrious father.”

The stupendous attempt to reverse the history of the western hemisphere, which hinged upon the struggle thus opened, was partly revealed by the Abbé Emmanuel Domenech, Napoleon’s secret personal representative in Mexico, when he afterwards wrote :

“ If monarchy should be successfully introduced into the Spanish republics, in ten years the United States

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would themselves declare a dictatorship, which is a kind of republican monarchy adopted by degenerate or too revolutionary republics. The Intervention was a grand and glorious undertaking, which promised to be for France the crowning glory of the reign of Napoleon III, and for Europe and the world the grandest enterprise of the nineteenth century. Behind the Mexican expedition there was more than an empire to found, a nation to save, markets to create, thousands of millions to develop; there was a world tributary to France, happy to submit to our sympathetic influence, to receive their supplies from us, and to ascribe to us their resurrection to the political and social life of civilized people."

## CHAPTER XIII

### BATTLE OF THE FIFTH OF MAY

WHILE the French army under General de Lorencez was boastfully preparing at the village of Amozoc for an easy victory over the despised Mexicans in Puebla, and traitors were hurrying to every secret center of treason in the country to organize rebellion, General Zaragoza called his commanding officers together in Puebla and told them that the resistance which had so far been offered to the invaders was insignificant, although the government had made every effort to equip the army as efficiently as possible under the difficult circumstances in which the country was placed, owing to long years of internecine strife; but, in any case, it would be shameful if a handful of foreign troops—not much larger than a scouting party, considering the size of the country—should reach the capital of the republic without having its advance contested in a manner befitting a country of more than 8,000,000 inhabitants; consequently, he earnestly entreated all present to fight to the last breath, so that if they did not win a victory, which was hardly to be expected, considering the lack of everything which constituted an effective army, they might at least succumb with dignity, leaving nothing undone on the Mexican side, and securing time for the preparation of defensive measures in the interior of the country, so that if the enemy suffered serious losses they would be



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obliged to take up their quarters in Puebla, where the Mexicans, although defeated, could continue to harass them.

Then the little Mexican army threw itself with energy into preparations for the defense of the city. General Diaz, who had borne the brunt of contact with the invaders, was to be second in command in a battle which is celebrated every year by Mexicans throughout the world.

The forces commanded by General Negrete occupied the small hills of Guadalupe and Loreto, outside of the city. General Diaz, with his own brigade and the forces of Generals Berriozabal, Lamadrid, and Alvarez, occupied a position at the brick kiln, the farthest structure outside of the city on the Amozoc road. It was here that the French attack was expected. Diaz was placed in command in order that he might be the first to meet the onset of the French veterans.

The invaders attacked Puebla on the morning of May 5, 1862, with more than 5,000 men.

Swinging off the Amozoc road, they unexpectedly formed a line of battle facing the hills of Guadalupe and Loreto and opened fire with artillery, following up the attack with a strong infantry column, which charged against the hills. At this, General Zaragoza sent the brigades of Generals Berriozabal and Lamadrid to reinforce the Mexican troops on the hills. The French column was exposed to the artillery fire of both the Loreto and Guadalupe forts and received a full volley from Berriozabal's brigade. The Mexican fire was so heavy that the French retreated in confusion, being attacked on their flank by the Vera Cruz battalion and a force of Puebla mountain Indians, still wearing their picturesque native dress.



GENERAL DIAZ IN THE BATTLE OF THE FIFTH OF MAY.  
[From a painting in The National Palace.]



## BATTLE OF THE FIFTH OF MAY

The French general, who witnessed from his batteries the defeat of his first column, sent out a second column, which joined the first. The whole force advanced straight against the hill of Guadalupe, and so gallantly did they charge that they passed the moats at the foot of the fort, and swarming up over each other's shoulders, they attempted to scale the intrenchments. So determined were the French to take the fort that they grasped the projecting muzzles of the Mexican cannon as they pulled themselves upward. The Mexican artillerymen were without small arms, which had been distributed among the infantry, but in that crisis they broke the heads of the climbing invaders with gun swabs and levers.

Finally, under a concentrated Mexican fire, the two French columns were driven down the hill in confusion. This was the republic's first answer to the declaration of the Conservative traitors that the people of Mexico would strew flowers before the feet of Napoleon's troops.

When the French made the second assault, General de Lorencez brought up a heavy force of marines, chasseurs d'Afrique, and chasseurs de Vincennes, and sent it, brilliant with colors and sparkling with bright steel, across the plain and the barley fields to attack General Diaz on the wagon road; but when the French drew near and received the united fire of his troops they turned and fled. Diaz ordered his brother to make a saber charge, but an impassable ditch saved the French, who, joining their comrades driven back from the fort of Guadalupe, turned about and offered a tenacious resistance. Diaz advanced, and the enemy fell back, but still continued to fight. He pursued the enemy far beyond the range of the Guadalupe cannon. A drunken captain brought him a message from the commander in chief ordering

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a suspension of the pursuit. Diaz, after listening to the tipsy messenger, refused to obey the order and declared that he would justify his conduct.

That day the flag of the Oaxaca battalion was carried by a soldier who was shot through the heart. Then a lieutenant seized it from the hands of the dead man and waved it in the air. He, too, was shot through the head and fell, clasping the colors in his arms. Still another picked up the flag, and it was still fluttering in Diaz's brigade.

Presently General Zaragoza's chief of staff reached Diaz and declared that if he did not obey the order to abandon the pursuit of the French he would be court-martialed. The Oaxacan explained that the enemy, although retreating, was still fighting, and that if he faced about at such a distance from the fort and from the rest of the Mexican forces, the enemy would undoubtedly turn around and make a determined attack. He insisted upon waiting until dark before retreating, and the chief of staff agreed with his idea.

This was the end of a battle in which the French were completely beaten, with a loss of more than 1,000 killed and wounded. The result of the first real trial of arms between Napoleon and the Mexican republic was celebrated in all the cities and towns of Mexico. Europe was astonished, Napoleon was stunned, by the news. Yet, were it not that Zaragoza had to send the brigades of O'Horan and Carbajal to deal with the rebellious Mexican renegades massed at Atlixco and Matamoras, there is little doubt that the Mexicans would have cut the French army in pieces.

"The victory was so unexpected," says President Diaz, "that we were completely surprised, and it seemed to me like a romance. I wandered over the field that

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night to assure myself that it was all real, contemplating the silent testimony of the dead on both sides, listening to the talk of our men around their fires, and catching glimpses of the distant lights of the enemy's encampment."

General de Lorencez was in a rage. He had been assured, both by the French Minister, M. Saligny, and by the traitor Almonte, that all he had to do was to advance resolutely into the country, and his soldiers would be received with open arms by the people of Mexico, who were opposed to Juarez and his government, and would shower flowers on their foreign saviors. He expressed his indignation in a proclamation to the defeated French forces:

"Soldiers! Your march toward the City of Mexico has been arrested by material obstacles which you had no cause to expect, considering what you had been told. You were assured, over and over again, that the city of Puebla was eager for your presence, and that its people would flock out to meet you, carrying garlands of flowers. Relying on these deceitful representations, we presented ourselves before the city of Puebla."

The Bishop of Puebla expressed the feelings of the Church by forbidding priests to administer the last sacraments to dying Mexican soldiers.

In spite of every provocation, the Mexican Government sent back all the French prisoners taken at Puebla, and even supplied them with money for expenses on the way to their own lines.

But the campaign of slander against the republic was pressed more cruelly than ever in Europe, and Mexican forbearance and chivalry were interpreted as the evidence of barbarian cunning. Only a few weeks later, for instance, the Duke of Tetuan had the hardihood to

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read aloud in the Spanish Cortes a letter from Zuloaga saying that Juarez intended "to exterminate the whole white population of Mexico."

After the stinging defeat at Puebla, the French remained for two days at Los Alamos, about eight miles from Puebla, where de Lorencez expected to be joined by the traitor army under Marquez. But Marquez did not arrive. O'Horan, who had been in pursuit of him, reached Puebla with 1,500 men to assist Zaragoza, whose forces were also strengthened by the arrival of General Antillon, with 3,000 men of the Guanajuato brigade, who had been marching to the rescue over the mountains from the interior.

So the proud French general, who had declared himself to be the master of Mexico, retreated at full speed to Orizaba. He was pursued by the Mexicans, but reached Orizaba safely on May 18th. Here he learned from Marquez in person that 2,500 Conservative horsemen were at hand, but were threatened by a Liberal force under General Tapia. General Lorencez sent a French column to the assistance of Marquez's men, and just as General Tapia was about to win a victory for the republic, the French reinforcements changed the tide of battle, and the Liberals were defeated. In this way the forces of the invading French and the traitor Mexicans were joined, and the Conservative leaders, from that time forth, became acknowledged subordinates of the French.

Another loss suffered by the republican army occurred on the night of June 13th, when a Mexican force which had been sent to reconnoiter the enemy's position at Orizaba was surprised on a hill near the city. A young French captain, with about 300 soldiers, carried a position occupied by a whole division of Mexicans. The

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Mexicans lost 400 men in killed and wounded, and the French captured many prisoners and 7 guns.

This disaster, due to the exhaustion of the Mexican troops and the failure to guard against a night attack, completely upset the Mexican plan to capture Orizaba and drive the French into the sea before Napoleon could send any further help. On the next day, after some fighting, the Mexican army retreated to San Andres Chalchicomula.

General Diaz was not yet thirty-two years old, yet his reputation, not only as a fighter, but as a commander of rare judgment and skill, and a patriot beyond the reach of Napoleon's enticements, is indicated by the fact that after having three times occupied the front fighting position in Mexico's resistance to invasion, he was now sent to Jalapa to take charge of the government and military command of the state of Vera Cruz, where the French army had established itself.

Napoleon's reply to the defeat of the Fifth of May was a formidable one. In September he sent General Elie Frederic Forey to Vera Cruz with a strong army. General Forey was one of the officers who helped to overturn the French republic and put Napoleon in power in 1851, and he was also a veteran of the Crimean War. When he reached Mexico, the new French commander found himself at the head of 22,500 French soldiers and 50 guns, in addition to 7,000 armed Mexican Conservatives, under the redoubtable and heartless Marquez.

During the months in which Napoleon prepared to drive his army into the heart of Mexico, President Juarez attempted to make ready for defense. Before the practically irresistible advance of Forey's main army, the Mexican forces, which were resting at San Andres



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Chalchicomula, retreated to the city of Puebla. On October 24, 1862, Forey arrived at Orizaba.

Traitors were busy throughout the republic. One day Juarez was startled by the discovery of an attempt by Conservatives to steal two cannons from a barracks in the capital itself. In the excitement which followed the exposure of this treachery, the President decided to call General Diaz from Puebla and give him command of the republican forces in the City of Mexico. He sent one of his ministers to make the offer to Diaz, but the soldier replied, "I cannot leave Puebla now. My duty is to stay here and fight the French."

From frontier to frontier, and from ocean to ocean, Mexico thrilled with excitement as the French army moved through that marvelous landscape of mountain and valley which stretches between the tropical lowlands of the coast and the high plateau on which Puebla and the City of Mexico lie. It was through this scene of majestic beauty that Cortes and his *conquistadores* moved against Montezuma's capital. These same valleys were trodden by the United States Army on its way to Chapultepec Castle in 1847. Many times had the inhabitants seen the tides of war roll up and down the green and flowering loveliness that makes a journey from Vera Cruz inland an unforgettable experience. But behind Forey's glittering army there was a terrible something as yet not fully understood. The sinister prestige of the house of Bonaparte was in some senses unbroken. Napoleon was the archpolitician of Catholic Europe, with countless soldiers at his disposal. He could dash army after army against those who dared to oppose him.

All disguise was thrown aside by France. General Forey, at the head of his 30,000 men, even abolished Almonte's pretended government in a curt newspaper

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paragraph. He moved to his task of founding a new empire with a cheerful pride and confidence that seem amazing in the light of what ultimately came to pass. Still, who could expect a soldier serving a master like Napoleon III to realize that nations are not made, but grow, and that the love of independence, once alive in the hearts of a whole people, cannot be dislodged in a battle or two?

Forey announced in a stilted proclamation that he had come to "free Mexico from the tyrannous demagoguery of Benito Juarez, against whom, and not against the Mexican nation, he was making war." Months before that, the sadder and wiser de Lorencez had written to his government from Orizaba: "No one here desires a monarchy, not even the reactionaries. The Mexicans would rather be absorbed by the Americans.

Not one partisan of monarchy is to be found in Mexico. A French occupation of many years will scarcely be sufficient to reduce the people to submission."

Taught by the bitter experience of his predecessor, Forey moved slowly and with great deliberation, and it was not until March 16, 1863, that the French arrived before the city of Puebla. Forey arrived on the next day, took personal command of his 30,000 men, and made ready to attack the city, which was defended by only 16,000 Mexican troops.

Meanwhile the Mexican forces, hovering between Vera Cruz and the capital, seized letters addressed to Jecker, the swindling adventurer whose \$15,000,000 of bonds were a part of Napoleon's excuse for attacking Mexico, and who was secretly in partnership with Napoleon's illegitimate half-brother, the Duc de Morny. These letters revealed much of the plot against Mexico and promised that 45,000 men were to be sent to subjugate

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the republic. President Juarez at once ordered the arrest and exile of Jecker and his fellow-conspirators. With Forey and his 30,000 troops encircling the doomed city of Puebla, it is interesting to read Napoleon's letter to the commander in chief of his forces, written as early as July 3, 1862, more than eight months before :

“ There will not be wanting people who will ask you why we expend men and money to found a regular government in Mexico. In the present state of civilization of the world, the prosperity of America is not a matter of indifference to Europe, for it is the country which feeds our manufactures and gives an impulse to our commerce. We have an interest in the Republic of the United States being powerful and prosperous, but not that she should take possession of the whole Gulf of Mexico, thence commanding the Antilles as well as South America, and be the only dispenser of the products of the New World. We now see by sad experience how precarious is the lot of a branch of manufactures which is compelled to produce its raw material in a single market, all the vicissitudes of which it has to bear. If, on the contrary, Mexico maintains her independence and the integrity of her territory, if a stable government be then established with the assistance of France, we shall have restored to the Latin race on the other side of the Atlantic all its strength and prestige; we shall have guaranteed security to our West India colonies and to those of Spain; we shall have established a friendly influence in the center of America, and that influence, by creating numerous markets for our commerce, will procure us the raw materials indispensable for our manufactures. Mexico, thus regenerated, will always be well disposed to us, not only out of gratitude, but because her interests will be in accord with ours, and because she will find support in her friendly relations with European Powers. At present, therefore, our military honor engaged, the necessities of our policy, the interests of

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our industry and commerce, all conspire to make it our duty to march on Mexico, boldly to plant our flag there, and to establish either a monarchy, if not incompatible with the national feeling, or at least a government which may promise some stability.”

## CHAPTER XIV

### DIAZ IS CAPTURED AND ESCAPES

As the French army and its renegade Mexican allies moved toward the doomed city of Puebla, General Zaragoza, who had routed the troops of de Lorencez, died of typhus fever, and General Ortega succeeded him at the head of the republican forces:

In the small Mexican army of 16,000 men, upon which the defense of beautiful Puebla depended, General Diaz commanded the second brigade of General Berriozabal's division.

Hardly had the French divided into two columns and begun to encircle the city, when Diaz, always restless for battle, and strong in the belief that he gains much who strikes quickly, urged Ortega to make a sudden attack while the enemy were separated and absorbed in the countermarching of the investing movement. His suggestion was unfortunately ignored, and on March 19, 1863, Puebla was completely surrounded. With the arrival of heavy French batteries on the next day, the famous siege was begun.

Through the foreign consuls the Mexicans urged the French to spare the women and children of Puebla from the horrors of a bombardment and siege by allowing them to leave the city, but the invaders coldly declined to consent to this act of mercy.

Before the besieging lines had been completed, Gen-

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eral Diaz was approached by Lieutenant-Colonel Manuel Gonzalez, one of the bravest of the old Conservative fighters, the very officer who had attempted to capture Diaz in one of his most desperate sallies in Oaxaca. Gonzalez was afterwards President of Mexico. He had fought with great valor on the Conservative side so long as the struggle was between Mexicans; but with those rivers of foreign bayonets pouring around one of the noblest cities of his country, and with a Mexican army called upon to give battle to an invading force of twice its size, Gonzalez brought his heels together, raised his head, saluted, and, looking his former foe in the eyes, said:

“I have asked you several times and through different channels to assist me to get a place in the ranks of the Mexican army, with the commission I now hold, of lieutenant-colonel. You have refused to help me in this, or the government has refused to let you help me. To-day is not a time for solicitation. As the enemy is here to attack the city, I come to ask you a very different thing—a place in the ranks and a rifle. Consider that I, like you, am a Mexican, and I claim the honor of dying for my country.”

This simple appeal, made by such a soldier, at such a time, stirred Diaz deeply. Seizing the hand of Gonzalez, he promised to give him a chance to serve Mexico; and presently he made his word good, putting Gonzalez at the head of a company to lead an attack on an isolated French position, in the presence of General Ortega, and afterwards presenting Gonzalez to Ortega, who commissioned him as a colonel. Seventeen years afterwards Diaz made Gonzalez President of Mexico.

At the beginning of the investment, Forey's siege guns destroyed a portion of the San Javier fort, and the

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French made a charge, but, although they reached the moat, the Mexicans drove them back. The French cannon fire was so continuous that the fort was finally battered beyond the possibility of defense. The two Mexican battalions defending the San Javier hill contested the advance of the French foot by foot, but on March 29th four strong columns drove back the little Mexican force, which lost 500 men in killed and wounded, and 3 guns. The French gained the fort, but the Mexicans continued to resist stubbornly behind the bull ring nearby.

Then came frightful fighting in the streets. The Mexicans fought from house to house, and as their weak shelters were shattered by cannon fire, they retreated, still fighting. In the midst of this scene of carnage General Diaz towered among his hard-fighting countrymen. For more than two days he held his own against the French, even when the battle became a hand-to-hand struggle, and finally beat back a heavy French column.

The fury of that two days' bloody grapple in the streets of Puebla, and the courage shown by the Mexicans, who were greatly outnumbered by picked soldiers under experienced officers, was frankly admitted by Captain Niox, of General Forey's staff, who afterwards wrote:

"When a building was ruined they defended the ruins. Then they took another position behind, and defended that in the same way. So every advance was amidst the springing of mines and over blood-stained ruins littered with corpses burned by gun-fire."

The events of Diaz's life have been stirring enough in themselves, thrilling and picturesque adventures following each other with almost incredible swiftness; but

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it is the long and unshaken rulership over a people semi-brutalized by alternate oppressions and revolutions, giving to him an extraordinary, almost mysterious, eminence among the noble and heroic figures of modern history—it is this world-wide acknowledgment of his breadth and strength as a statesman, that lends such a fascination to the early deeds which fixed his name so surely in the hearts of his people. At times in his life one catches glimpses of delicately poetic sentiment; then passions as fierce as a roaring furnace are revealed; he seems like a romantic boy, mad for adventure; he moves through the red whirlwind of war, a man of iron, with a heart of fire; again he is all gentleness, mercy, sagacity, pardoning his enemies, inspiring peace, and in his white old age toiling without rest or complaint for the civic regeneration and security of his people.

He has told something of his part in the siege of Puebla:

“On the night of April 1, 1863, I received orders to remove my brigade from the square of San José, to turn over that post to the reserves, and to guard the front of the city, facing the enemy from south to north, which had been defended until then by General Escobedo. The line of buildings began on the south with the convent of San Agustin, continued in a northerly direction to the Hospice, and ended at La Merced.

“Placing my troops, I spent the whole night inspecting the blocks and intrenchments, giving communication from one to another. I tore down walls where it seemed necessary to gain a clear area of fire. Luckily the French did not attack during the next day and I took advantage of that rest to strengthen the defenses, setting all available hands to work.”

When General Diaz relieved General Escobedo, he found included in his line of defense the Hospice, which



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had been seized by the French. Escobedo had ordered him not to attempt to recapture the Hospice just then, but to take possession of all the adjoining houses still within Mexican control.

“At six o’clock in the evening I began to realize that the enemy were undermining us,” continues President Diaz. “The strokes at first appeared to me to be distinctly subterranean and to come from the Hospice, toward the line of San Agustin, in front of the house known as the barracks of San Marcos. However, I was mistaken, and soon perceived that the Hospice block walls were being bored in order to make a breach for cannon, through which the men could fire into the barrack room of San Marcos. I immediately occupied this building, strengthened as much as possible the defenses of posts facing the Hospice, and arranged troops to fire from the balconies.

“The attack came soon. At eight o’clock the fire of a battery destroyed a grocery shop on the right of the porch, but the roof, being very solid and strongly built, did not collapse, as the French had probably expected. During the cannonading a petard was exploded at the door of the porch, but I had strengthened this from the inside by a heavy backing of flagstones from the patio, and behind it packed a mass of earth. Because of this the petard did not break the door, and the French were forced to attack through the open breach at the grocery shop. These attacks were vigorously repelled for more than two hours.

“There was a perilous and decisive moment when the impetuous charge of the French through the breach demoralized my soldiers, who began to flee away in disorder, but in the narrowness of the breach they became jammed.

“At this instant I ran forward and discharged a howitzer gun, aimed toward the doorway, among the French, and the effect at close quarters so terrified them

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that they abandoned the courtyard which they had begun to enter and made a rapid retreat to the door.

"Among those who fled were the crew of the howitzer, and I was left alone with a corporal. We were reloading the howitzer when a Zouave approached, and he would probably have killed the corporal if I had not come to the defense. I sought to draw my pistol, but it had been so battered in the fighting that it broke in two, so that I held nothing in my hand but the stock. I flung the useless stock at the Zouave, and it struck him in the breast. I advanced to disarm him, but when he felt the impact of the stock he probably thought he was wounded, as many shots were fired just then, and he ran to the door.

"This revived the spirits of my men; many of them went back to their posts, and from the shelter of a fountain in the middle of the courtyard kept up a rapid fire on the doorway. I had made a large excavation in getting out material for strengthening the back of the door. This served well as cover for the enemy. I therefore sent Lieutenant José Guillermo Carbo up to the second floor corridor of the building to fire down on the soldiers thus protected. Their fire was so telling that the French made no further resistance and retired to their positions.

"All was over at the block of San Marcos at half-past ten o'clock that night, after fourteen and a half hours of continuous fighting. When the enemy had withdrawn I advanced with a sufficient force to close the breach their artillery had opened and to restore our earth-work defenses. This work cost me several men, for it was carried on under the enemy's rifle fire. But at last the work was completed."

That same night the French, in their fierce desire to penetrate into the city, attacked another part of Diaz's line of defense, employing the same methods. Their artillery forced a breach in a wall and their infantry

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rushed in and took possession of the outer courtyard of a house and fought savagely to win the inner court also from the Mexicans. In spite of his terrific fight of fourteen and a half hours at San Marcos, Diaz was immediately in the thick of the new night struggle.

“I arrived just as the outer court had been lost,” he says, “and, assisted by the lawyer Castellanos Sanchez, I passed over the old wooden counter at the entrance to the inner courtyard, which was defended with some other debris; and, flying, I stationed some of my soldiers in the inner court. It was defended heroically. As some of our platoons of sappers and miners had been left behind in rooms opening upon the outer court, now in possession of the enemy, they continued to fight for more than five hours against the French. I had breaches made in the walls in order to get into communication with our brave men and supply them with ammunition. In this way we secured the support of our soldiers who had been cut off from us, and finally drove the Zouaves back into the street, and I immediately covered with my men the breach through which they had entered. This operation ended at daybreak on April 3, 1863. The lawyer Sanchez distinguished himself by his reckless valor.”

Night and day the battle raged in the streets of Puebla, which were strewn with the dead and dying. The roaring of artillery in the narrow roadways, the crashing of shells, the blaze of rifles, the falling of cannon-smashed walls, the shrieks of the wounded, the fierce shouting of the French and Mexican soldiery as they charged against each other or contested the smoking ruins inch by inch, went on ceaselessly.

Again and again Diaz distinguished himself by his personal bravery and fighting intelligence.

At dawn on April 3d he had been fighting without

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rest for about twenty hours and had maintained his line unbroken. At nine o'clock of the same morning the French cannon opened a breach in the walls of part of his position, which, however, he defended successfully. Then two companies of Zouaves made a charge through the breach in the San Marcos block, which had been attacked and repaired the night before. The entrance through the porch was defended from the court, and the enemy were forced to gather in the wrecked grocery shop at the side. But General Diaz had made ready for the second appearance of the French in that place. In the night he had had ten holes cut in the vaulted roof and had placed a Mexican soldier at each hole. Suddenly forty grenades were hurled down among the Zouaves, and when the smoke and dust settled, it was discovered that they had retired, leaving their dead and wounded among the ruins.

Again, on April 5th, the French made a vigorous attempt to carry the breach in the San Marcos block, but Diaz once more repulsed them, capturing Captain Galland and thirty wounded Zouaves who were trapped in the courtyard when their comrades were driven back.

The terrors of the siege grew worse daily. Food became scarce. The soldiers began to show signs of exhaustion. Mining and sapping and house-to-house fighting were being pressed in all directions. Men, women, and children began to ask for food. In the scores of stately churches, from whose altars the republican army had been solemnly excommunicated, the priests and their supporters tremblingly awaited the result of the thunderous ordeal of fire and blood.

Away beyond the snow-capped, dead volcanoes that rose from the plain where Cortes once slaughtered the priests and nobles of Cholula, President Juarez and the

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republican Congress in the City of Mexico eagerly sought for news of the siege.

On the road between beleaguered Puebla and the capital was ex-President Comonfort, once more serving the republican cause, with 6,000 Mexican recruits under his command. It was not until the night of April 13th that O'Horan succeeded in passing through the French lines to Juarez's government news that the defenders of the besieged city were short of ammunition and were rapidly approaching the point of starvation.

Yet in the teeth of this appalling danger, Juarez seemed to be complete in his faith of success, and on April 22d wrote to Montluc, his consul-general in Paris, saying: "I have perfectly understood that only armed force would make the Emperor retrace his steps, and realize the insanity of his enterprise, since he has obstinately misunderstood the voice of truth and of reason. Understanding the imminent peril which threatens the Mexican nationality, the government will prepare all the means of defense at its command."

The confidence of the Indian President was great and beautiful, but it could not help the men who were battling week after week for their lives and the life of the republic, within the French ring of fire and steel drawn about Puebla. "The man in the black coat" might make the walls of the national palace ring with noble phrases and at times awe the talkative Congress into silence by his calmness, and Comonfort might reconnoiter and maneuver on the road to Puebla with his 6,000 patriots, but General Ortega's cry for relief, which came through the besieging lines, found no effective answer.

As the Mexicans grew faint from lack of food, the French pushed the battle harder. The attack on the

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southwest line became grand and general, the artillery fire being prolonged and concentrated. On April 25th General Diaz was compelled to meet a terrific assault on the Santa Inés convent fort.

In this attack upon the Santa Inés fort, the French hurled more than 1,000 shells against the walls of the old convent where General Diaz again won glory for the Mexican name.

At daybreak the enemy opened a prolonged cannon fire on all that part of Puebla. The assault against Santa Inés was begun from the Mesón de la Reja, a building which the French had taken a few days before from a Mexican force under Sanchez Roman. On the other side of the street was the one-story building of San Agustin, which faced the Mesón de la Reja, but was separated from the street by a garden and a low wall. The San Agustin structure had a number of low rooms, the roofs of which were swept by the French fire from the balconies of the Mesón de la Reja.

In San Agustin, Diaz was posted with the battalions of Oaxaca and Jalisco. The Oaxaca hero's face was black with powder smoke and his uniform was covered with dust. In the twilight of the morning the French had mined the outside walls of Santa Inés, beside San Agustin, and when the mines were exploded the walls fell. Over the ruins the Mexicans poured the fire of eight cannon and the French replied with a strong battery. The air was filled with screaming projectiles, and the whole neighborhood shook with the explosions. As the French columns charged to gain Santa Inés, the fire of Diaz's men in the street trenches was murderous. French soldiers crawled on their stomachs to see what damage had been done and were shot as they appeared. Many times the massed Zouaves staggered back, only to

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rush forward again with cheers. The street was streaming with blood and clogged with dead and wounded; but the Mexicans maintained their resistance in spite of the Zouave rushes in the street and the steady fire of the French riflemen in the balconies of the Mesón de la Reja.

Suddenly two columns of Zouaves approached behind moving wooden shields, and in this way dashed forward, separated themselves from their supports, and penetrated to the convent of Santa Inés.

In this moment of supreme danger General Diaz led several platoons of his men through one of the doors which led to the roofs of the low rooms in the garden of San Agustin, and under his fearless leadership the platoons advanced over the roofs, under steady volleys from the opposite balconies, as far as the street corner. Lying down flat, Diaz and his men poured a thick fire into the French forces. The Zouaves were paralyzed by the fierceness of this new resistance, and the assaulting columns reeled and fled back, leaving behind them as prisoners the 7 officers and 130 Zouaves who had entered the convent of Santa Inés and were thus cut off.

On the next day General Ortega made Diaz a brigadier-general in the permanent army in recognition of his personal gallantry in the Santa Inés fight.

The sufferings of the besieged Mexicans grew more horrible. On April 29th General Ortega sent word to Comonfort that he was almost out of ammunition and that he must break the siege or perish. On May 5th O'Horan had a sharp encounter with the French, in which he lost 21 prisoners. At dawn the Mexicans had opened fire in memory of their great victory over the French exactly a year before. The besieged troops heard firing in the distance, and supposing that Comonfort was advancing with relief, General Negrete

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sallied out with a division on the left of the Loreto hill. But the firing ceased and Negrete returned to the plaza.

Again and again the Mexicans attempted to break through the French lines. Again and again they listened and watched for signs of assistance from without. General Ortega once more wrote to Comonfort asking for assistance in a retreat from Puebla which he planned for May 14th.

Battles occurred every day between the contending forces. The tragedy of the situation was indescribable. On May 12th a great number of hungry women and children, and a few men, carrying white flags in their hands, tried to make their escape from Puebla, but they were scattered by French artillery fire and fled back to the city, through whose streets they ran shrieking for bread. On May 14th the besieged Mexicans made a desperate sally to get food. The white-faced soldiers, weakened by starvation and lack of sleep, frequently fainted in the ranks as they advanced. On the 15th and 16th the French continued to pour a great and continuous cannon fire into the city. At ten o'clock of the morning of the 16th all the Mexican guns were dismounted.

The last great scene of the siege developed when the Mexicans wrecked their guns and ammunition, and as the enemy moved into the city, the soldiers who had been living on morsels of horse and mule meat, and fighting with scanty ammunition against twice their numbers, broke their rifles and swords in sight of the French, stripped off their uniforms in the streets, and when the Marquez cavalry entered Puebla between lines of white flags fluttering in the windows, the vanquished Mexican soldiers openly hissed the traitor's men.

Comonfort had tried to relieve Puebla, but after los-



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ing about 1,000 prisoners and 8 guns, he was forced to retreat with his remaining 2,500 men, to protect President Juarez in the capital.

After the surrender of the starving army of Puebla, General Forey offered to allow the Mexican officers to remain at liberty in the city if they would give their parole not to take up arms or interfere with the government of Mexico again. These terms were indignantly declined. Not one of the imprisoned commanders would give his word to abandon the republican cause.

The surrendered Mexican officers, save those who escaped, were sent across the Atlantic and imprisoned in various French fortresses. Among them was the gallant General Manuel Gonzalez Cosio, now Minister of War and Marine, who was so poor when released that he was about to volunteer in the United States army, for the sake of the war bounty, when a fellow-prisoner relieved his distress and enabled him to return to the service of Mexico.

General Diaz, as usual, did not content himself with an attitude of passive patriotism. His country was not so much in need of martyrs as of fighters. He instantly made up his mind to escape before the beginning of the march of the Mexican prisoners to Vera Cruz the next day.

“In the evening of May 21, 1863, being in the provisional prison, I took off my uniform,” writes President Diaz. “It was just when the friends and relatives of prisoners were entering, to bid them good-by. I saw that it was an easy thing to pass through the crowd without being recognized. I went downstairs, resolutely covering my face with a serape [Indian blanket], and as it was very cold this did not arouse suspicion. To prevent the sentry from stopping and examining me,

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I thought it a good idea to speak a few words to the officer in charge, so that the sentry might not suspect anything. Thus I reached the gate, but found that the commander of the guard there was Captain Galland of the 3rd Zouaves, who, having been made prisoner by us a few days before, had some acquaintance with me. I did not speak to him, but simply saluted and reached the street without being recognized, although he probably had some misgivings, because he at once went upstairs to see if I was with my companions. Some of these also succeeded in escaping captivity, either from the prison or on the road, and a few reached Europe."

Once away from prison Diaz had some trouble in escaping, as all the streets were guarded by bands of traitors. In this difficulty he encountered a friend who led him to his house. There General Berriozabal, who had also escaped from the prison, lay concealed. A Mexican officer, who had surrendered to the French, was paid by General Berriozabal to smuggle them out of the city. All through the night the two generals, exhausted by the privations of the siege and tortured by the humiliation of a surrender to the invaders, fled through the mountains. In their anxiety to avoid the roads they lost their way, and at daybreak they discovered themselves again before Puebla and actually heard the voices of the French sentries. They immediately hurried on to the town of San Miguel Canoa and introduced themselves as Mexican traitors. Knowing that the parish priest was a friend of the infamous Almonte, they persuaded him to furnish a guide to Tlaxcala. They were pursued, but managed to elude the enemy and reach the City of Mexico.

The fate of more even than the republic of Mexico, perhaps, hung upon that rough flight of the two generals; for if Diaz had been captured by Forey and sent

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to a fortress in France, as the other Mexican officers were, the probabilities are that Napoleon's army would have crushed the Mexican nation and established a European empire long before the United States—just then in an agony of woe over bloody Chancellorsville—could have been free to intervene.

After the unconditional surrender of Puebla, both President Juarez and the Congress, with the commanders of the remaining Mexican troops, knew that it would be useless to attempt to resist the advance of the French army. There were signs of treason in many directions. Ortega's army was taken prisoner. The republic was without money or credit. The unspeakable hucksters of finance were turning to the conquering French. The Church was putting forth all its strength and spending its money freely to arouse the spirit of rebellion. It was only a matter of days when the capital must be given up to the invaders.

In that day of profound distress, President Juarez asked General Diaz to decide who should take the portfolio of war in his Cabinet and who should take supreme command of the army, himself or General Berriozabal. The stalwart young general assured Juarez that he would obey any order, but he felt that his youth—he was only thirty-two years and nine months old—and his recent rank of brigadier-general in the permanent army, might cause older officers, who had served the nation well, to become lukewarm or desert if any higher honors were bestowed upon him. The one thing now was to save the republic. Diaz chose, therefore, to take command of a division of the republican army and went to Ayotla, in the hills to the eastward, where the French invaders must pass in their advance on the capital. Here he waited to fall on Forey's army, perhaps in the night time.

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It is said that Diaz was as eager for the fight at that time as though he had never known a Mexican defeat. He carried his head high. He walked like a victor. His great dark eyes were alive with enthusiasm. He inspired his soldiers by his manner.

But before the hero could give another proof of the fighting stuff in him, President Juarez and the Congress decided to change the seat of the Constitutional government to San Luis Potosi. The President sent word to his army in Ayotla that the government was pulling down the flag on the palace and would retire to San Luis Potosi. Diaz answered Juarez in a telegram, saying :

“ We may have to wait long for victory, perhaps years, but I promise that you will yet raise our flag on the palace again. PORFIRIO DIAZ.”

How gloriously he fulfilled the promise made just after he had escaped from a pitiable scene of Mexican defeat will yet be seen.

As Juarez and his government retreated northward, Diaz was ordered to return to the capital with his division and from there to follow the march of the body of the Mexican army under General Juan José de la Garza. He joined General de la Garza at Toluca, to the west of the capital. As the City of Mexico was now occupied by the French, the army at Toluca was without money and almost without food. De la Garza seemed to be dazed by the difficulties of his situation ; but Diaz went to work with vigor and raised some funds. He then started with his division for Querétaro, followed by General de la Garza, with two wrecked divisions. There was mutiny in de la Garza's command and he arrived at Querétaro exhausted, the road being strewn with abandoned artillery and materials of war. From Querétaro,

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de la Garza managed to push on with his troops to the republican government at San Luis Potosi.

Diaz remained at Querétaro until General Berriozabal, Juarez's new Minister of War, arrived from San Luis Potosi and made the young Oaxacan general known as the general in chief of the main body of the Mexican army.

## CHAPTER XV

### NAPOLEON ENTHRONES MAXIMILIAN IN MEXICO

Now the great plot contrived in the criminal brain of Napoleon III was rapidly developed. The grim young Oaxacan general who had escaped from Puebla was forgotten in the glory of the French march to the Mexican capital. On June 7th General Bazaine, a veteran of the Carlist and Crimean wars, and one of the victors of Solferino—he who afterwards was defeated at Gravelotte and surrendered Metz with 173,000 men to the Prussians—reached the City of Mexico with the van of the French forces. Two days later General Forey made his formal entry with the rest of his troops and the armed Mexican traitors. Beside Forey rode M. de Saligny, the intriguing French Minister, and the unspeakable murderer, Marquez.

Well might the armed creatures of Napoleon smile and bow to the crowd that cheered them as they reached the capital. The noble Juarez was a fugitive, and President Lincoln, the friend of the Mexican republic, was sorrowfully walking the floor of the White House, waiting for news of Grant at Vicksburg and praying for the victory which came three weeks later at Gettysburg.

But it was a mistake to forget Diaz, the young republican general, not yet thirty-three years old, who was preparing to make a memorable march down into his native

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state, where the patriot Indians would assemble at his call to resist the French veterans of Magenta and Solferino under Napoleon's picked generals.

Immediately upon his arrival at Mexico City, Forey spoke to the Mexican nation in the name of his imperial master. Meanwhile he compelled the inhabitants of the capital to support his officers, had Napoleon make Marquez an officer of the Legion of Honor, and indulged in an orgy of personal extravagance that amounted to almost \$50,000 in a few weeks, spending \$15,000 for looking-glasses and more than \$4,000 for flowers.

The national programme announced by Forey was a shock to the Church. It provided that the possessions of the clergy nationalized by Juarez, and already sold, would remain in the hands of the *de facto* owners, and that it was desirable that there should be a general liberty of religions in Mexico. In other words, Napoleon's general sought to soften the attitude of the republicans toward the invasion of their country by confirming the essentials of the pitiless and sweeping Laws of Reform, against which the Church and its allies had been fighting in the field for three years.

Thirty-five persons were designated, with authority to choose a provisional government of three regents to exercise the powers of national administration, and 215 notables of the capital, who should select a council to agree definitely on a permanent form of government for the whole country. The government triumvirate consisted of Juan N. Almonte, Don Pelagio Antonio Labastida, Archbishop of Mexico; and General Mariano Salas; with Bishop Ormachea and Don Ignacio Pavon as alternates.

The property of all Mexicans who opposed the armed intervention of Napoleon was confiscated. Military

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courts were set up everywhere, with authority to judge all questions without appeal, and execute sentences within twenty-four hours.

One of the three regents, Labastida, who was created Archbishop of Mexico immediately after President Juarez had banished him as a traitor, flew into a violent rage because the French insisted upon legalizing the confiscation of church property formerly ordained by Juarez's government. The archbishop resigned from the regency and secretly denounced the French in bitter language. One of Forey's generals was compelled to threaten Labastida into silence. The preposterous Assembly of Notables, picked out by Forey to choose a form of government for Mexico, met in the capital on July 7th, and three days later, in the midst of Napoleon's army, it made known the inspiration of its deliberations:

"First: The Mexican nation adopts moderate and hereditary monarchy as its form of government, with a Catholic prince.

"Second: The sovereign will have as his title, Emperor of Mexico.

"Third: The imperial crown of Mexico is offered to His Imperial and Royal Highness Prince Ferdinand Maximilian, Archduke of Austria, for him and for his descendants.

"Fourth: In case, because of circumstances which cannot be foreseen, the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian should not come to take possession of the throne which is offered to him, the Mexican nation commits itself to the benevolence of His Majesty Napoleon III, Emperor of the French, in order that he may indicate to it another Catholic prince."

This shameless plan, devised by Napoleon to extinguish the republic forever, and proclaimed as the will of the Mexican people by a foreign army whose steel was



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still wet with the best blood of the country, had been carefully prepared by the master of the Tuileries.

It will be recalled that Gutierrez de Estrada, the Mexican who set out in 1840 to establish monarchy in Mexico through European intervention, married a member of Prince Metternich's family and was able to come in contact with members of the Austrian imperial family. This ultimately resulted in a Christmas visit to the beautiful castle of Miramar on the shore of the Adriatic Sea, where the eloquent Mexican was the guest of the Archduke Maximilian.

It had been at first thought by the Mexican conspirators in Europe that the Duc de Morny would make a suitable prince for Mexico. He was the bastard half-brother of Napoleon, upon whom the proposed invasion of Mexico seemed now to depend. For some reason the idea was displeasing to the Emperor, who vigorously objected. Gutierrez de Estrada's visit to Miramar, where he attended mass with Maximilian, convinced him that the Archduke would make a candidate for the Mexican throne acceptable to Napoleon, who, having helped Victor Emmanuel to drive Austria out of Italy, would be enabled apparently to show friendship to the Emperor of Austria by placing the Mexican crown upon his younger brother's head.

It was Gutierrez de Estrada who suggested the Austrian Archduke's name to Napoleon and who persuaded his fellow-conspirators to procure the hearty indorsement of the Pope. Maximilian was only thirty-one years old. He was a tall, slender, and unusually handsome man, with a blond beard, pale blue eyes, and red lips. As a mere stripling he had commanded the Austrian navy; at the age of twenty-five years he had married the seventeen-year-old daughter of the King of Belgium, Princess

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Maria Carlota Amelia; later on he had governed the Italian territory of Austria, living in great extravagance. Afterwards he had retired to the sumptuous castle of Miramar, where he and his fair young wife dreamed away their time among flowers and books.

This heir to the throne of the Cæsars was of a soft, vacillating character, a trifle proud and willful, but poetic, romantic, and fond of ease and luxury. A fitter dupe for Napoleon could scarcely be imagined. The French Emperor, who sought only a field for his own power and glory, desired a crowned tool who could be used or thrown aside at will, a mere instrument to serve his purpose in opening up a career of conquest in America. As a devoted son of the Church, a solemn believer in the divine right of kings, and an archduke of the House of Hapsburg, the weak, handsome, and sybaritic young Maximilian would attract the enthusiastic support of the Emperor of Austria and the Pope; the charm of his person and the distinction and antiquity of his blood would win the Mexicans and flatter their pride.

Long before the solemn buffoonery of Forey's Assembly of Notables in Mexico, Napoleon had secretly offered the Mexican crown to Maximilian, with the eager consent of Pius IX, who saw in the proposed empire the immediate restoration of the wealth and power of the Mexican Church.

Notwithstanding the allure of Napoleon's offer, Maximilian hesitated. His young wife, Carlota, wild with ambition and dazzled by the prospect of an imperial crown in a land of fabulous riches and beauty, urged him to accept. His state of mind may be judged by entries in his secret diary, published after his pitiable death, by order of his imperial brother, the Emperor Francis Joseph:

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“Must I separate myself forever from my own beautiful country? You speak to me of a scepter, a palace and power. You set before me a limitless future. Must I accompany you to far shores beyond the great ocean? You desire that the web of my life should be wrought with gold and diamonds. But have you power to give me peace of mind? Do riches confer happiness in your sight? Oh, rather let me pursue my quiet life unseen beside the shadowing myrtle. The study of science and the muse are more pleasing to me than the blaze of gold and diamonds.”

The execution of Maximilian by a file of Mexican soldiers has given an undeserved pathos to these words; yet they must be taken as the literary musings of a youthful egotist immersed in the shallow contemplation of his own fickle moods, for when they were written he had already agreed to Napoleon's terms, and many months before, ere yet the French invaders had fired a shot against the Mexican republic, he had sent the conspirator Almonte to Mexico as an imperial representative, with power to appoint officers in the Mexican army and to confer titles upon his Mexican subjects.

The departure of a Mexican deputation to offer the Mexican crown to Maximilian in the name of the Mexican people was a pompous farce, intended to give an appearance of historical right to the great crime arranged by Napoleon. This committee was headed by Gutierrez de Estrada himself, who, after intriguing against the republic for more than twenty years, was now the spokesman of the conspirators who pretended to express the will of the nation they were betraying to the imperial criminal at Paris.

On October 2, 1863, Maximilian received the Mexicans at Miramar. On the next day Gutierrez de Estrada, in a long speech, offered the Mexican crown to him. At

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this time the French army occupied little more than the country stretching from Vera Cruz to the City of Mexico, with a few other cities, and French courts-martial were imprisoning, flogging, and shooting those who had dared to oppose the intervention, while the loyal masses of inhabitants throughout the country were sending messages of sympathy and respect to President Juarez.

The slender, fair-haired Archduke made a shrewd show of diffidence when the Mexicans picked out by Napoleon's general offered him the crown of a yet unconquered country. For months Mexican traitors and malcontents, soldiers, bishops, priests, had been received at stately Miramar, where an altar to the Virgin of Guadalupe, the patron saint of Mexico, was artfully placed in the Archduke's bedroom.

With his hand upon his heart Maximilian declared that he would accept the throne of Mexico only on condition that the will of the Mexican nation should be ascertained by a popular vote. Thereupon Gutierrez de Estrada and his associates went straight to Napoleon III, who at once ordered General Bazaine, the successor of Forey in command of the invading army, to secure a vote of the Mexican people.

The Emperor of Austria was opposed to the gorgeous adventure proposed for his brother, but found it difficult at that time to overcome Napoleon's cunning. Mr. Motley, then the American Minister at Vienna, explained the difficulties of the situation in this way :

“ That a prince of the House of Hapsburg should become the satrap of the Bonaparte dynasty, and should sit on an American throne, which could not exist for a moment but for French bayonets and French ships, is most galling to all classes of Austrians. The intrigue is a most embarrassing one to the government. If the

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fatal gift is refused, Louis Napoleon, of course, takes it highly in dudgeon. If it is accepted, Austria takes a kind of millstone around her neck in the shape of gratitude for something she didn't want, and some day she will be expected to pay for it in something she would rather not give."

In a characteristic letter to Oliver Wendell Holmes Mr. Motley gave this gay picture of the prince selected to found an empire in a land of incessant and universal revolutions :

"There is no glory in the grass nor verdure in anything. In fact, we have nothing green here but the Archduke Maximilian, who firmly believes that he is going forth to Mexico to establish an American empire, and that it is his divine mission to destroy the dragon of democracy and re-establish the true Church, the right divine, and all sorts of games. Poor young man!

"Maximilian adores bull-fights, rather regrets the Inquisition, and considers the Duke of Alva everything noble and chivalrous and the most abused of men. It would do your heart good to hear his invocation to that deeply injured shade, and his denunciations of the ignorant and vulgar Protestants who have defamed him."

It is hardly necessary, in the circumstances, to say that the so-called popular vote taken in the small part of Mexico occupied by French troops was a sham. It was sufficient, however, to satisfy Maximilian, who on April 9, 1864, renounced his Austrian rights, and on the next day announced his acceptance of the Mexican crown.

He took the imperial oath with great ceremony; a *Te Deum* was sung and a royal salute fired. The Mexicans present went on one knee and kissed his hand, and he immediately revived the Sacred and Knightly Order of Our Lady of Guadalupe, bestowing the grand cross

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upon Gutierrez de Estrada, General Tomas Mejia, and the blood-stained Marquez.

Then Maximilian publicly authorized a Mexican loan of £8,000,000, the contract for which he had secretly signed in Paris some weeks before. This agreement with Napoleon, which had been privately discussed and agreed upon while General Bazaine was pretending to take a vote of the Mexican people, provided that Maximilian should at once receive 8,000,000 francs. It also provided that the expenses of the French invasion, 275,000,000 francs, should be paid by Mexico; that all future expenses of the French occupation should be borne by Mexico; that the French army should be gradually reduced to 25,000 men, to be supported by Mexico; that the supreme command of all troops in Mexico, both native and French, should be held by French officers, and that Mexico should pay in full the old French claims presented in 1862, and satisfy the claims of French subjects for losses sustained in connection with the invasion.

It is said that there were several secret compacts made with Napoleon, among them an agreement to give to France the strategically important territory of the great state of Sonora, but the precise details of Maximilian's covert surrenders to Napoleon have never been responsibly ascertained.

The extravagance of Maximilian and Carlota had swept away their fortunes and even Miramar was heavily mortgaged. Not only did Maximilian receive the 8,000,000 francs advanced to him by Napoleon's consent but he was able to pay 1,500,000 francs of debt on the castle of Miramar. Besides this, 1,800,000 francs was provided for a Belgian legion, and 2,500,000 francs for an Austrian legion to accompany him to Mexico. Practically all that was left of the £8,000,000 of bonds was turned

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over to Napoleon's agents, save £1,000,000 retained for the treasury of Mexico.

Maximilian's allowance of \$125,000 a month and the Empress Carlota's allowance of \$16,666 a month—amounting to \$1,700,000 a year, to be taken from the bankrupt Mexicans—began on the day of his acceptance and oath.

Before accepting the Mexican crown Maximilian had made a tour through Europe. He now went to Rome, and as Emperor of Mexico received the blessing of the Pope. He had already conferred with Napoleon about the government of the new empire.

Fresh from the interview with Pius IX, the young Emperor and Empress of Mexico—it is convenient to call them by these titles—sailed with their suite on the Austrian man-of-war *La Novara*, and arrived in the harbor of Vera Cruz, May 28, 1864. They were welcomed with elaborate ceremonies, processions, flowers, and shouting. Bazaine and the Church had strained every resource in the effort to make the entry of the new sovereign brilliant and impressive. The ceremonies at Vera Cruz and Mexico City cost more than \$115,000, and more than \$101,000 were spent on improvements in Chapultepec Castle to fit it for an imperial residence. While still at Miramar, Maximilian had abolished the regency, but when he reached Mexico, Almonte, the head of the regents' government, turned over to him \$300,000 of public funds, whereat he appointed Almonte to the post of Master of Ceremonies.

There was a glittering pageant in the Cathedral of Mexico on June 12th, when Maximilian and Carlota were solemnly enthroned. They went to live in Chapultepec Castle and set up a court of theatrical splendor. The imperial dining service of solid silver and gold cost

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a round million of dollars. The gilded state carriage, which required four horses to draw, cost \$47,000. It may be seen to-day in the National Museum of Mexico, side by side with the pathetic little old black carriage in which President Juarez moved about with his government while Maximilian and Carlota made merry with Mexican millions.

It is said that about \$5,000 in Mexican gold coin was handed on a gilt plate to Maximilian every morning, and about \$500 was presented in the same way to Carlota each day.

The new Emperor scattered money right and left. In five months he spent \$319,670 on horses and carriages, livery and harness, and even bestowed \$75,000 for a court theater, although his troops were crying for money.

Napoleon had invaded Mexico because the republic had failed to pay the interest on its debt and had confessed its bankruptcy. Yet the Austrian youth whom he had placed upon the Mexican throne had begun his reign by fastening on the nation an annual expenditure of \$36,681,000, including international obligations, interest on the home debt, allowances to the Emperor and Empress, religious worship, pay of the army, the civil list, pensions, and the secret service. As there was no possibility of a national revenue of more than \$16,000,000 a year, it will be seen that the new empire began with an assured yearly deficit of \$20,000,000.

Maximilian sent a minister to Great Britain with a salary of \$40,000 a year. He sent a minister to France with the same salary. Marquez, the assassin of unarmed prisoners, was sent to Constantinople to procure a firman from the Sultan for a convent of Mexican nuns at Jerusalem.



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While Maximilian and Carlota played the game of empire with borrowed money, the court swarmed with rascals and sycophants. The Emperor was assured by Bazaine that Mexico was practically conquered. The French general, who received a marshal's baton from Napoleon in August, seemed to bend his efforts to lull Maximilian into a sense of safety, and the young Emperor spent his time in dilettanteism.

The complete conquest of Mexico was left to Bazaine, who had nearly 30,000 French soldiers and something like 28,000 Mexican troops, in addition to the Austrians and Belgians; and the country was brutally ravaged, while Maximilian, a poet and the master of six languages, collected and classified beetles, butterflies, and plants; deciphered archæological inscriptions, or consecrated his time to the subtleties of court etiquette, although the bishops were frowningly demanding the restoration of Church rights, and the serious affairs of government were in the confusion of procrastination.

Bazaine was drenching the country with blood. The Church was angrily protesting against the inaction of the government, and there were signs of a grave Clerical defection.

But the Emperor, pleased with the seemingly unlimited wealth at his disposal, and relying on French tales of easy victory over the republican forces, continued light-heartedly to neglect pressing state questions and studied the costumes of court attendants, directed the uniforms of ornamental halberdiers to serve at Chapultepec Castle, and pursued his researches in botany and entomology, while the captivating Carlota planned private theatricals and dances with her French maids of honor, or rode on horseback dressed in a brilliant Mexican costume.

The Archbishop of Mexico and the other prelates in

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vain demanded that Maximilian should keep faith with the Vatican by revoking the Laws of Reform, restoring the property of the Church, reviving the religious orders, forbidding any other worship than that of the Catholic religion, and confiding all educational work exclusively to the supervision of the Church.

The young Emperor of Mexico smiled and continued to invent new devices for the ornamentation of his court. With grim Bazaine and his 50,000 men hunting the republicans in their mountains, Maximilian's one absorbing thought was how to reign gracefully, charmingly.

The Pope sent a nuncio from Rome to Mexico with a solemn letter of remonstrance. Even then Maximilian refused to undo the work of Juarez, and Bazaine indorsed his attitude, for the sales of ecclesiastical property would furnish money for the war. The nuncio finally addressed to the Emperor a communication couched in such arrogant terms that Maximilian's ministers, after supporting his decision to continue the sales of church property under the old law of mortmain, and to tolerate all religions in Mexico, replied to the haughty envoy of the Vatican:

“Maximilian, a citizen and member of the Christian communion, bows with respect and submission before the spiritual authority of the common father of the faithful; but Maximilian the Emperor and representative of the Mexican sovereignty does not recognize any power on earth superior to his own. The Emperor and the Pope have both received directly from God their full and absolute power, each within his respective limits. Between equals there can be no subjection.”

This, while Mexico was a red abyss of war.

## CHAPTER XVI

### DIAZ KEEPS THE REPUBLIC ALIVE IN THE SOUTH

PRESIDENT JUAREZ and his government were driven steadily and helplessly northward, from San Luis Potosi to Saltillo, to Monterey, across the desert to Chihuahua, and thence to the frontier village of Paso del Norte, 1,100 miles from the capital.

The long-suffering but unbendable Indian patriot continued to assert the dignity of his office and the just authority of the Constitutional republic as he rolled along the rough roads in his dusty black carriage, wedged in his seat between valises and packages of state documents, while his faithful body servant and coachman, Juan Udueta, sometimes wept as he saw the lines deepen in his master's stoic, coppery countenance.

From the very day on which General Diaz received at Querétaro command of the main body of the Mexican army, after his escape from the French at Puebla, he began, with General Berriozabal, a serious reorganization of the forces, remodeling into single battalions each two or three of the diminished battalions, repairing armament and materials for artillery and transportation, collecting mules, establishing schools for officers, drilling troops, and promoting everything necessary to restore to the army the military form which it had been losing.

It was finally decided that General Comonfort, who had been Secretary of War, should relieve Diaz in that

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region, so that he might be able to throw himself into other places and open the campaign for the repulsion of the invaders from Mexico. Soon after this, Comonfort was trapped by Marquez's bandit followers and deliberately murdered.

In the end it was ordained that General Diaz, with the first division of the army, should undertake the terrible march southward to Oaxaca, through the states of Querétaro, Mexico, and Guerrero—a country teeming with armed robbers and traitors—to establish his headquarters at the city of Oaxaca, and from there to organize a new army corps for the East. In effect, the indomitable young soldier, who only ten years before was a humble law student studying at the feet of Benito Juarez, with an income of twelve and a half dollars a month, was given command over the states of Oaxaca, Vera Cruz, Chiapas, Tabasco, Yucatan, and Campeche, which command was later on to be extended over the states of Puebla and Tlaxcala.

It was a formidable task. The division of 2,800 men, with which Diaz had to cross a vast territory, already entered by the enemy's forces, was practically the hope of the oppressed republic. Thirty thousand French troops and traitor Mexicans were distributed between Toluca, Mexico City, and Puebla. Bazaine was sending columns in all directions to the interior and toward the state of Guerrero. If the nucleus of the republican army should be destroyed, all chance of saving the southern and eastern states from Napoleon would then be gone.

With that awful responsibility resting upon him, General Diaz executed an elliptic strategic march from Querétaro to Oaxaca, keeping in constant touch with the movements of the French and skillfully avoiding conflicts

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with them, but several times fighting bodies of Mexican traitors, as at Taxco and Iguala. During this march, on October 14, 1863, he received his commission as a general of division, the highest rank in the Mexican army.

The appearance of the three tired and weather-worn republican brigades in Querétaro, and the stern attitude of their young general, produced grave political consequences.

"I arrived in Oaxaca in the last days of November, 1863," says President Diaz, "and my arrival disconcerted Governor Cajiga, and his secretary, Esperon, since they had effected a sort of truce with the French [who had advanced from Puebla as far as Tehuacan]. They realized that this truce would have to end with my presence, since I came for the very purpose of organizing and waging war. The governor, having been informed of the object of my march, and the authority vested in me by the Federal government, sent to me a communication, saying that he would not put himself under my orders, because the powers delegated to me by the general government were unconstitutional; and he asked me if I was disposed to use force in carrying out the orders of President Juarez. I answered that in these circumstances our arms had no other object than to defend the nation from foreign invaders and traitors, and that I placed in the second category anyone who resisted compliance with the orders of the Federal government. In the face of this, Governor Cajiga resigned his office in the presence of the Legislature, which then dissolved, leaving the State without a head. On this account I assumed the government of the state of Oaxaca on December 1, 1863, and named as my secretary Don Justo Benitez [Diaz's old schoolmate and almost foster-brother], but finding that my duties as governor took up much of my time needed for the army, on February 12, 1864, I named as Governor of the State General José

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Maria Ballesteros. Benitez acted as my military secretary."

Diaz organized a new brigade of infantry, composed of the Morelos battalion, the Juarez battalion, and the Guerrero battalion, and gave the command to General Cristobal Salinas. The command of the second brigade he gave to Colonel Francisco Carreon, and he appointed Captain Guillermo Palomino general commandant of artillery. To the brigade of cavalry he added the regiment of Oaxaca lancers commanded by his brother, Lieutenant-Colonel Felix Diaz, and a squadron of the National Guard of Tehuacan. He also organized a good medical corps.

When Diaz attacked the outposts of the French forces, the French commander at Tehuacan, not knowing of the change of government in Oaxaca, sent a note to him complaining of violations of the agreement that there were to be no hostilities till the nation could decide if it would accept foreign intervention.

After some months of threatening French preparations, the signs of accumulating foreign troops grew so ominous that Diaz drew back his forces around Oaxaca. Then a column of the enemy, headed by General Courtois de Hurval, and another column marching from another direction, led by General Brincourt, advanced against Oaxaca.

Before this, Diaz had been compelled to send 800 of his soldiers under General Salinas to protect the state of Chiapas, which had been invaded from Guatemala by a force of Mexican traitors under Juan Ortega and the fighting Franciscan friar, Victor Maria Chanona. In this way Diaz swept the imperialists from Chiapas. His troops defeated the enemy at Ixtapa, on January 4, 1864,

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besieged them at San Cristobal seven days later, and captured that place on January 22d.

With French generals gathering their veterans to overwhelm him, Diaz had already succeeded in holding Oaxaca for the republic and rescuing Chiapas, even when the invaders were in possession of its capital.

He was completely cut off from Juarez and his government, and was compelled to govern according to his own discretion, at a time when his officials had to move about the country constantly to escape capture by the enemy. So great was his influence, so deeply did he stir the hope and faith of the republicans in the South, and so decisive was the effect of his heroism and energy upon states that might otherwise have been neutral in the war for Mexican independence, that even after his army was crushed and scattered, and he himself was a helpless prisoner, the spirit of republican resistance aroused by him could not be extinguished in the South.

It was a time of republican despair in the North. Twice had General Tomas Mejia, the brave and intelligent little Indian soldier who served Maximilian against his own country, defeated the forces of General Negrete, who tried in vain to protect the headquarters of Juarez and his ministers. Juarez had fled from San Luis Potosi to Saltillo, but on reaching that place he discovered that General Vidaurri, the governor of Nueva Leon and Coahuila, was attempting to surrender those states to the French and refused to recognize the Constitutional President. Juarez denounced Vidaurri as a traitor, and the unfaithful governor fled to the United States. Whereupon Juarez established his government at Monterey, from whence he was driven through a parched wilderness to Chihuahua, and then to the extreme frontier of the country.

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Meanwhile Bazaine was driving all before him in other directions. Having aggregate forces of about 63,000 men, he sent one column of 8,000 men, including the traitor Marquez, under the command of General Castagny, to march through Toluca and Acambaro up to Morelia in Michoacan; and another column of equal strength, under General Douay, was to advance by way of Querétaro and Lagos, and reach Guadalajara. Later on Bazaine caught up with Castagny's column, leaving General Neigre in charge at Mexico City. The republican forces were scattered and broken.

It was at this time that General Neigre innocently stirred up a row which practically ended in the excommunication of the French troops, when he asked Archbishop Labastida to indicate chapels where the Protestant soldiers of his force might worship.

General Castagny had to modify his operations and sent Marquez to Morelia, who occupied it on November 3, 1863, after General Berriozabal had retired with his republican soldiers.

General Douay reached Guadalajara and prepared to enter it on December 8th, and Bazaine with the forces of Castagny arrived at Siloa on December 12th, in pursuit of the republican general Doblado, who, uniting with General Uraga, had 10,200 men in Piedra Gorda. But the two republican generals separated their forces. Doblado marched north and Bazaine abandoned the pursuit. Douay marched against Uraga, but that general made a swift advance against Marquez at Morelia, where he attacked the enemy on December 18th with great fury. Marquez was wounded in the face during the battle, but he resisted desperately, and Uraga, having left 800 republicans dead and wounded on the field, retreated by way of Zamora. He maneuvered skillfully



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toward the Pacific coast, and on January 2, 1864, managed to reach Zapotlan el Grande (Ciudad Guzman), in the state of Jalisco.

In the meantime Bazaine advanced, and on January 5, 1864, occupied Guadalajara, which had been evacuated on the previous day by General Arteaga, who moved on to join General Uruga at Zapotlan el Grande.

The republican armies were being hammered to pieces or driven northward. There were few supplies and almost no means of paying troops. The leaders of the various expeditionary forces of Juarez's government, having no center of action, and being separated by immense distances, were forced to make war on their own account, living hungrily on a poor country.

As the imperialist armies pressed northward, and in advance of them went broadcast news of Maximilian's successes everywhere, the republicans began to waver. Even General Uruga, who had 8,000 men under his command in Jalisco, showed signs of vacillation. Colonel Ramon Corona, convinced that Uruga was unfaithful, withdrew from him. Then General Arteaga declared Uruga to be a traitor and refused to recognize him. At this, General Uruga, having been exposed, fled with two squadrons to the enemy. That part of the republican army, demoralized by plot and sedition, was reduced to only 4,000 soldiers in June, 1864.

General Gonzalez Arteaga, with 1,500 men, marched from Saltillo and joined President Juarez, who was also joined by General Patoni with a small division. Juarez being in a position to retreat to Chihuahua, Arteaga and Patoni advanced to threaten the capital of Durango, already occupied by the French general L'Heriller. Meantime the French general Castagny had reached Monterey, and General Mejia, with his Mexican rene-

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gades, had seized Matamoras at the mouth of the Rio Grande River.

On September 21, 1864, the forces of Arteaga and Patoni were attacked and defeated at Majoma. The Mexicans retreated in good order, but that night, although not menaced, they disbanded. They had not been fed for two days, and when night fell and there was no food, they broke their ranks and scattered.

When Juarez heard of this new disaster, he and his government moved out across the desert, accompanied by an escort of about 200 men. Still the great Zapotec's heart was strong within him as he sat in his stained and grimy carriage in that long, jolting journey of 400 miles through a scorched cactus wilderness, with his men falling on the road day by day. They arrived in Chihuahua on October 12th.

Corona and Rosales, in Sinaloa, were struggling to maintain their republican forces against a powerful French expedition, which was advancing against Mazatlan on the Pacific coast with 5,000 men from Losada and a squadron by sea.

General Arteaga, hemmed in by Douay and Marquez in the south of Jalisco, suffered a defeat at El Chiflon, retreated to Michoacan, was routed at Jiquilpan, and with the remnant of his forces united with Generals Regules and Riva Palacio, who were struggling hard to the south and east of Morelia.

It was in this dark hour of his country's history that General Diaz, cut off from news of what was happening in the rest of Mexico, became the strong right arm of the almost beaten Mexican republic.

As the two French columns advanced on Oaxaca, Diaz left General Escobedo to watch one column, while he made a secret march of a day and part of a night to

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San Antonio Nanahuatipan, where his scouts reported the main body of the French to be, on their way to Oaxaca with a detachment of infantry and artillery.

“At nine o'clock on the morning of August 19, 1864,” says President Diaz, “I arrived at San Antonio Nanahuatipan, after a secret march, unperceived by the enemy, who occupied that small town. I struck them roughly, doing much damage to a battalion bathing in the river; but, as the French soldiers had their arms stacked, after the surprise they made a very vigorous defense. They left on the field the greater part of their clothing and accoutrements and many naked dead, as they all fought naked. I had given orders to Colonel Espinosa y Gorostiza, who had faced this same French expedition at Cuicatlan, that he should come up to San Antonio Nanahuatipan with his battalion, two light mountain guns, a company of the Juarez battalion, and a squadron commanded by Colonel Ladislao Cacho; but he was prevented from reaching me, and because of this lack of troops I had to retreat, with considerable losses in officers and soldiers; but the enemy did not venture to follow me.”

After this fight with naked French soldiers, Diaz returned to Oaxaca and also withdrew General Escobedo to the city.

The French, taught by experience to beware of Diaz's keen strategy and thunderbolt methods, did not advance again for some time, but continued to construct two great roads, while Diaz threatened them and watched them with his scouts.

The invading army, gathering for the attack on Oaxaca, grew stronger. The hearts of the people in the regions governed by Diaz sank. His resources dwindled and deteriorated. The soldiers not under his immediate command became demoralized.

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A great despair settled upon the republican cause. The French and their traitor allies had driven back the patriot forces in the North. Juarez and his ministers were wanderers. The Constitutional government was sinking under repeated defeats and treasons. Even Uraga and Vidaurri, the republic's trusted generals, had become deserters.

With his little force in Oaxaca, the spirit of the soldier who was yet, in the long years to come, to lead Mexico into a path of safety, peace, progress, and honor, seemed to grow loftier.

The republic could not die while the sword of Diaz was unsheathed.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN TRIES TO TEMPT DIAZ

CONVINCED that General Diaz was the key to Mexico, Maximilian resolved to tempt the hero to abandon the republic and serve the empire.

The romantic young Emperor in the midst of his gay court began to feel the grisly, nameless terror of slow papal condemnation.

Having an incurable levity of judgment, and being unable to appreciate the passionate love of Mexican independence which lay at the heart of the republican cause, he even invited Juarez to accept office from his hands, and had the audacity to offer the incorruptible President a safe-conduct in order that they might meet. To which Juarez replied:

“It is impossible for me to accede to this call; my official occupation will not admit of it. But if in the exercise of my public functions, I could accept such an invitation, the public faith, the word and honor of an agent of Napoleon, the perjured, would not be sufficient—of a man whose safety rests in the hands of Mexican traitors, and of a man who at this moment represents the cause of one of the parties who signed the treaty of Soledad.”

But now, with Juarez a distant fugitive, with the republican cause in the North dying of a thousand wounds and treacheries, and the populace cowed by barbarous

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massacres and the plundering and burning of houses and villages, it seemed to Maximilian and Bazaine that the one supreme barrier standing in the way of the empire was General Diaz, who not only presented a stubborn fighting front in Oaxaca but was keeping the heart of the South on fire. Under the leadership of the young Oaxacan general, the patriot Indians seemed to fight with extraordinary bravery.

There came to Diaz's ears whisperings that, the empire being an established fact, it would be well that Maximilian, instead of being advised by dangerous men, should be surrounded by Liberals, who might incline him to their general ideals. General Uruga and General Vidaurri had gone over to the Emperor. Instead of opposing Maximilian, would it not be wiser, in the interest of the whole nation, to take a place in his forces and enable him to put into effect the inward sympathy which he felt for the struggling patriots of Mexico? The lawyer Manuel Dublan [afterwards in President Diaz's Cabinet], a relative and intimate friend of Juarez, appeared in Oaxaca and went to see General Diaz, offering him a high post in the empire under Maximilian. In effect Dublan carried a letter of credentials signed by Juan Pablo Franco, who had been named as superior political prefect of Oaxaca by Maximilian. In the Emperor's name he said that, if Diaz would support the imperial government, he might retain command of those states which formed his line of operations in the East, and that no foreign troops would be sent to them.

"I was indignant in the face of these infamous propositions," says President Diaz. "They caused me all the greater anger because they were presented to me by a man who had family and personal relations with President Juarez, and who had received distinctions from the

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Liberal party. I immediately sent to have him arrested, so that he might be shot. Finally the influence of Don Justo Benitez and General Salinas saved his life. Happily, in time, he lived this down and rehabilitated himself as much as possible, putting his clear intelligence at the service of the republic in an opportune occasion, with success."

Maximilian and Bazaine well knew the decisive influence of Diaz's heroic personality and commanding generalship in the continuance of the struggle, and the Emperor sought to approach him in every way. Having been frustrated in the attempt to seduce him from his duty through the lawyer Manuel Dublan, Maximilian tried the expedient of approaching him through the unfaithful Mexican general, Uruga, who had abandoned the republic for the empire.

President Diaz, in his memoirs, tells the story of this last effort to reach his patriotic conscience through a general under whom he had served in many battles and for whom he had had a deep affection and admiration :

"General Don José López Uruga, who, in command of republican troops, had gone over to the enemy, and was employed near the person of Maximilian, sent to me his adjutant, a man who had been chief of my staff, and was now serving the empire. He handed to me a letter dated Mexico City, November 18, 1864, in which Uruga invited me to follow him in his desertion, and offered to leave me in command of the states along the Eastern frontier, with an agreement that he would not embarrass me with foreign soldiers, except at my own request. I had had great esteem and respect for General Uruga but I was fully determined that neither this nor any other influence should make me hesitate in the fulfillment of my duty. For the rest, Uruga had lost by his conduct the respect with which he had formerly inspired me.

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“It would, I thought, be a good opportunity to test the temper of my subordinates if I showed them the invitation that General Uruga had sent to me. I called a meeting of the generals and colonels under my command, and read to them the letter and my reply warning General Uruga that a second envoy, no matter what his mission, would be dealt with summarily as a spy. On the same day I sent a report of what had happened to all the governors and military leaders of the Eastern lines.”

It is interesting, in the light of subsequent history, to read the cunningly contrived letter upon which Napoleon's crowned puppet relied to turn the stainless sword of Diaz against his country:

“MEXICO, November 18, 1864.

“Señor General Don Porfirio Diaz.

“VERY DEAR FRIEND: It would make a long story to tell all that I have suffered by reason of my party. Luis [Uruga's secret messenger] will tell you something; but let it be enough for me to say that without any idea of fighting, nor of leaving the country south of Jalisco, nor of limiting myself to taking from the people only that which might be necessary for subsistence, everyone was hoping for and seeking a fortune in the revolution, and this while he had no intention of fighting, and, indeed, intended to be the hindmost.

“I did not consider that this was serving the country, nor defending our cause, nor honoring our principles; and not being able to take ship or get away at any point, I surrendered in June to the Emperor, acknowledging nothing, but in the earnest hope of ending the war. I acted wrongly, because I acted with distrust. But now that I proclaim our principles here, that I am listened to, that I contend on a legal field, and that I see how noble, how patriotic, how progressive and how illustrious the Emperor is, I tell you, my friend, that our cause is the cause of the man who, a lover of his country and its



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sovereignty, looks only for the salvation of its independence and its integrity. He [Maximilian] is here fighting with honor and loyalty for our own principles, neither extenuating them by apology, nor denying them, nor abandoning them.

“If I had seen any danger to our independence or the integrity of our territory, I swear to you I would have died in the mountains rather than have acknowledged anything, and if I should have had the cowardice to come here I should have had the good faith to say to you, ‘It is necessary to fight.’ But it is not so, Porfirio. I believe that you will do me justice, you who know me, and that you will accept my view of the circumstances. We lose ourselves, and we shall lose our nationality, if we continue this unfruitful war without result. Everything will come into the power of the Americans, and then what shall we have for a country? Until now you have a name clean, honored, and respected, a good reputation and the means of doing much in the cause of progress, entering frankly and nobly into the work. To-morrow, fighting for the selfish interests of worthless men, for the intrigues produced by their pride, and to rescue a situation now entirely changed, nothing will be left to you—not even a name of glory.

“I send to you Luis, whom you know. This and my name, are they not a guarantee of frankness and loyalty? Luis will talk to you. I am here for everything you may wish, and when you come and see what is going on and return to your post and your forces, if you do not agree with what I say, or that I say what is most expedient, then say what you think would be better, and I will co-operate in everything. Let us remain united. If we have lost the system, let us not lose the principles, and, above all, the country, in its integrity and independence.

“*Adios*, dear Porfirio. You know how I have loved you, with what frankness I have always talked to you, and that I am the friend who loves you and kisses your hand.

“JOSÉ L. URAGA.”

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Deserter though he was, Uruga had trodden many a battlefield with Diaz and knew him too well to believe that anything but an appeal to his love of country could move him. In shrinking from making any suggestion of a bribe, either of wealth or rank or power—the common means employed by all who served Napoleon—the traitor paid a significant tribute to the patriot.

The reply of Diaz to the tempter, through whom Maximilian sued for his sword in the name of patriotism, is one of the most interesting and eloquent documents in the wonderful story of Mexico. Notwithstanding the obviously strong emotion which moved General Diaz when he wrote his reply to Uruga, it will be observed that in addressing the deserter his sleepless military instinct prompted him to exaggerate the strength and extent of his forces. Following is the letter :

“ Señor Don José López Uruga, Mexico.

“ MY FORMER GENERAL AND ESTEEMED FRIEND :

“ With indefinable pleasure I opened my arms to Luis [the messenger], and fixed my gaze on what you were pleased to send to me by him, because I had believed that his coming and his mission might have had another object ; but, although the disillusion was as prompt as it was painful, and Luis has offered to me to talk to you frankly and fully, I have to answer you, if not at great length, yet with all fidelity.

“ I am very grateful for the mediation you see fit to offer me, for if, indeed, I lament the errors which have led to this step, I understand all the foundation of esteem and appreciation it comprehends.

“ I will not constitute myself a judge of your acts, because I should lack the necessary impartiality, and before submitting you to justice, I should embrace you as a brother and should promise that you could retrace your steps.

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“ But if you can, according to your judgment, explain your conduct, I should not be able to explain mine, because the means at my disposal, the troops and people who aid me—who, as you tell me, were adverse to our cause in the Center—are in the East so many pledges of our unfailing triumph.

“ The personnel of my forces is of the same kind as that of the brigade I commanded at Puebla; and you know that in few places have the French met with such resistance as in the state of Oaxaca. I have also troops from other states, but they are so absolutely identical with the rest in their morale, discipline and enthusiasm, that they deserve to be considered as their equals.

“ In the Eastern states there is maintained an administrative organization so vigorous, and so scrupulous in its accountability, that its limited resources provide us with the necessities of life without it being necessary for us to take them from the people, or for me to find myself in the pain of having to allow pillage or extortion. The French, after the resistance of Puebla, have done nothing but take a triumphal walk about the interior; and I promise myself that in Oaxaca, if destiny reserves such a triumph for them, it is going to cost them much, and can be accomplished only by crushing us by superior numbers.

“ But it will not be long before we ourselves may obtain the victory, and the whole republic will the next day convert itself into a vast barrier. The struggle may, it is true, be prolonged, like that which at the opening of the century made us free and independent, but the result is certain.

“ You do me the justice, for which I also thank you, to believe that I hold an honored and clean name, which is all my pride, all my patrimony, all my future; yet to the salaried press I am no more than a bandit, nor shall I be anything else to the Archduke Maximilian and the invading army; and I accept with calmness and resignation that my name should be smirched, without repenting that I have consecrated myself to the service of the republic.

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“ I grieve in my soul that, having separated yourself from the Army of the Center, with the intention of not compromising yourself in the politics of the foreigners, you should have been magnetized by the Archduke, and in time may unsheathe in his defense the sword which in other days you have given to the country; but if it should be, I shall at least have the consolation of having continued in the ranks in which you taught me to fight, and whose political symbol you engraved on my heart in words of fire.

“ When a Mexican presented himself to me with the proposals of Luis, I ought to have had him tried according to the laws, and not to have sent to you in reply more than the sentence and a notice of the death of your envoy. The great friendship you invoke, the respect I have for you, and the memories of better days, which bind me so intimately to you and to that common friend, relax all my energy and convert it into the weakness of returning him to you safe and sound, without the least word of odious recrimination.

“ The test to which you have subjected me is a very grave one, because your name and your friendship constitute the only influence (if there be one) capable of dragging me to deny all my past, and to tear with my own hands the beautiful flag, emblem of the liberties and independence of Mexico. Having been able to answer this test, you may believe that neither the cruelest disillusion nor the greatest adversities will ever cause me the slightest vacillation.

“ I have spoken to you almost exclusively of myself, but not because I have forgotten my meritorious comrades in arms, nor the heroic towns and states of the East which have made so many sacrifices for the defense of the republic.

“ There is no room to doubt the loyalty of such worthy soldiers, nor of public opinion, loftily spoken and converted into decisive deeds at Tabasco, in Chiapas, in Oaxaca, and even at Vera Cruz and Puebla. As you know, the two former states have thrown out of their

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bosom the imperialists; the third does not permit them to take a step in their territory; and in the fourth and fifth, the fires of war are maintained over an extensive zone.

“Do you think that I could without being a traitor to my duties dispose of the fate of my comrades only to make my own secure? Do you think that they would not demand of me, and with reason, a narrow account of my disloyalty, and that they would not be able to sustain themselves alone, or to confide their leadership to another more constant and complete than he who had abandoned them? So it is then, that neither by myself, nor by the distinguished personnel of the army, nor by the towns of this extensive part of the republic, can the possibility of a reconciliation with the foreign invasion be thought of, resolved as we are to fight without truce, to conquer or die in the challenge in order to bequeath to the generation which succeeds us the same free and sovereign republic which we inherited from our fathers.

“Would to God, General, that making no compromise, you might return in time to take up the defense of such a noble and sacred cause. That in the meantime you may be well-preserved is the sincere desire of your very attentive friend and faithful servant,

“PORFIRIO DIAZ.

“OAXACA, November, 1864.”

This ringing reply to Maximilian's secret cozenings not only stirred the patriotic fighting spirit of the republican leaders, to whom it was at once published, but it warned Bazaine that the South and East could not be taken by treacherous negotiations, and that he could only hope to overcome Diaz by fighting.

The French field marshal decided to take the field in person, at the head of a strong army, against Oaxaca and its untemptable young general.

The assembling of a sufficient force to crush Diaz without delay was an imperative necessity to Napoleon's

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plans. Although the republican army in the North had almost disappeared, and President Juarez and his ministers had retreated to a point from which they might easily escape into the United States, it was important that the imperialists should strike a final decisive blow in Mexico and Maximilian's reign be accepted everywhere.

The tide of war had changed in the United States. Lashed to the mast of his flagship, Farragut had won Mobile Bay; the Union had taken Atlanta; Sherman had started on his dread march to the sea; Sheridan had swept the Shenandoah Valley; and Abraham Lincoln, the friend of Juarez and the Mexican republic, had been elected President a second time, carrying every free state but New Jersey.

The remorseless voice of events called insistently for the destruction of Diaz and the subjugation of Southern Mexico before President Lincoln could be free to confront Napoleon with the Monroe Doctrine, backed by an irresistible army.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### DIAZ, TAKEN PRISONER, AGAIN ESCAPES

Not only did Marshal Bazaine consider it necessary to take command in person against Diaz, whom the Emperor had failed to corrupt or persuade, but with more than 10,000 picked men, gathered for the capture of Oaxaca, he had large siege guns carried on men's shoulders to make the investment overwhelming.

The struggle for the possession of Oaxaca—which ended with the imprisonment of Diaz—began on December 18, 1864, when Colonel Felix Diaz, at the head of the Oaxaca Lancers, had a bloody fight with the vanguard of the united French columns of Generals d'Hurbal and Brincourt near Etla, in which Major Basilio Garzo killed the Count de Loire. Colonel Diaz inflicted heavy losses on the French and pursued them for three leagues, but on meeting the main body of the enemy, which opened fire with artillery, was forced to retreat.

Some days after this General Diaz learned that Bazaine was on the way to Etla over the Mixteca road, with an escort of 500 Zouaves, 300 cavalry, and a half battery of cannon. It seemed to him that a brigade of cavalry could strike Bazaine effectively before he joined his main forces threatening Oaxaca, and he ordered a certain officer to move with a brigade to meet Bazaine. The plan was carefully laid, and Colonel Felix Diaz, who was to have shared in the attack, did his duty with customary

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valor; but for some mysterious reason the officer in command of the cavalry disappeared on the night before the attack was to have occurred, taking with him the Northern Legion and the San Luis Lancers to the hills of Tetela, in the state of Puebla, and the deserter did not return to Diaz.

This inexplicable desertion upset Diaz's plans, for he could not count on the help of cavalry outside of the city, the small body of horsemen under his brother's command being too weak to undertake operations against the enemy. He had thought of fortifying and defending the city, using the cavalry to keep open a way through which he might obtain outside help.

The general even considered the question of risking all in one fight, instead of shutting himself up in the Oaxaca fortifications. If beaten, he could retreat to the mountains, leaving the enemy nothing but the heavy artillery. But he had only 2,800 men with which to fight Bazaine's mobile army of 10,000.

Time was flying and the French were approaching. One of Diaz's generals knew his idea of an open battle and somehow the thing became known among the inferior officers. The result was confusion. The officers advised that the city should be defended. Diaz's intention was to surprise his own soldiers by giving them a battle formation in front of the enemy, and then in one audacious onslaught to rush them to the conflict without giving time for reflection. But the plan was spoiled by lack of secrecy on the part of the important officer to whom it had been divulged.

"After this," says President Diaz, "nothing was left to me but to accept the siege, as the enemy was already near. I might even then have abandoned the city and



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undertaken a retreat by way of the mountains, but it would have been an exceedingly perilous adventure, for no transportation had been prepared because of my former arrangements, in which I counted on help from the outside; and now, with the enemy in sight, there was no time in which to improvise new plans.

“I never supposed that the result of the siege would be victory, but I believed that the defense would be a long one and that we should be able to damage the French greatly. I was also certain that the city would not be taken by assault if I could maintain the garrison at anything like its existing strength—but it kept decreasing when it was known that our cavalry had deserted. This desertion in the face of the enemy greatly depressed the spirits of the men.”

For a terrible month and a half Diaz withstood the French siege. Gradually Bazaine contracted his lines about the city. His forces grew stronger by reinforcements, while the garrison of Oaxaca grew weaker by deaths and desertions. With the loss of his cavalry, the numerous mountain bands of National Guards, who had now no means of protection in reaching him, were in hiding or had dispersed. The republican troops at Tehuantepec, upon which he had relied for some help, were known to be disaffected. Diaz's soldiers were fighting without hope against four times their numbers. Again and again he attacked the French to delay their operations. The bombardment of the town was terrific and almost continuous. Bazaine was using four-inch mortars in addition to his other heavy artillery. Food was scarce in Oaxaca. Traitors were at work among the soldiers. One day, while the French were attacking, Major Adrian Valadez shouted to his men to jump their trench and go over to the enemy. Thus Diaz lost an officer and 100 men. Colonels Toledo and Corella had



PRESIDENT DIAZ AND HIS SON IN CHAPULTEPEC PARK.



## DIAZ, TAKEN PRISONER, AGAIN ESCAPES

great difficulty that day in dealing with their demoralized soldiers. Soon after Lieutenant-Colonel Modesto Martinez deserted, but was killed by a French sentry who mistook him for a spy.

On February 8, 1865, the situation in Oaxaca was appalling. The garrison had exhausted its supply of food and ammunition. For many days the population of the city had been begging for food, and their constant complaints further depressed the soldiers.

Diaz moved about his native city, encouraging, commanding, and doing his utmost to check the general spirit of despair. He had done everything in his power. He had melted church bells into cannon balls. He had even put a howitzer in a tower of the convent of San Francisco and had remained with it until the members of his staff dragged him away. But finally his officers declared that it was impossible for a garrison so small and demoralized to stand an assault by Bazaine's strong and well-armed troops.

"In this condition of complete demoralization a defense of the city was no longer possible," says President Diaz. "I could not sacrifice my men uselessly. We had no reserves of any kind. At this time not even 1,000 effective men remained. We could not reply to the enemy's fire in the decisive attack which I now knew to be imminent. I therefore decided to surrender.

"As I went through the plaza, there was a bombardment and cannonade, which indicated a simultaneous attack on our more remote posts and fortifications. Mounting my horse, I rode out that night to explain to General Bazaine, in his quarters at Montoya, that the attack he was preparing would be unnecessary."

Throwing aside all customary precautions, he went direct to Bazaine, without even sending an adjutant in

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advance to announce him. His one fear was that the field marshal's craving for glory might lead him to take the now helpless city by assault rather than to accept a bloodless surrender. He believed that by going at once to the French headquarters he might prevent the needless slaughter.

As Diaz rode out of his fortified lines at ten o'clock at night, accompanied by Colonels Apolonio Angulo and José Ignacio Echegary—for he was determined to have witnesses at his interview with the unscrupulous French general—he moved rapidly toward Montoya. In the darkness they were challenged by the outpost, and one French sentinel fired, but Diaz shouted that they were not armed, whereupon they were conducted to Bazaine's headquarters at Montoya.

The field marshal did not rise when Diaz entered his quarters, but sat at a table covered with papers, a severe look upon his heavy, arrogant face. Without a moment's hesitation the Mexican leader strode forward and saluted. Bazaine returned the salute coldly. Diaz looked his conqueror steadily in the eyes, and with much dignity declared that he had come to avert unnecessary bloodshed. Although he had entered the French lines without a flag of truce and without any guarantee of his personal safety, there was not the slightest sign of embarrassment in his bearing. The two officers who attended him say that he bore himself serenely in the presence of Bazaine.

“When I explained to General Bazaine that the city could no longer make a defense and that it was now at his disposition,” says President Diaz, “he seemed to consider it to be a submission to the Empire, and answered that he was glad that I realized my error, which he considered a grave one because it was criminal to take arms against one's sovereign. I answered that it

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was my duty to say to him that I would neither support nor even acknowledge the Empire, and that I was as hostile to it as I had been at the cannon's mouth, but that resistance was now impossible, and additional sacrifice was useless, for I was without men or arms. An expression of displeasure suddenly came into his face and he reproached me for breaking the agreement I had signed at Puebla, not to take up arms in opposition to the Intervention.

"I declared that I had not signed such an agreement. General Bazaine immediately ordered his secretary, Colonel Napoleon Boyer, who was present, to bring the book containing the documents signed in Puebla. His secretary searched for my name, and began to read in a loud voice. Not only had I refused to sign when the book was presented to me in Puebla, but I had even declared that I would not sign because there were sacred obligations to my country which I would fulfill as long as I was able to do so.

"As the secretary reached this answer which I had made, he ceased reading and handed the book to General Bazaine, who read the lines and closed the book without saying another word about the matter."

In his private memoirs the future President of Mexico describes how he turned over his native city to the invaders, and adds simply, "The state of my mind in that act of my life may be imagined."

Extraordinary precautions were taken immediately by the French to prevent the escape of a prisoner whose power to maintain Mexican independence had been so impressively demonstrated. On his way to Puebla as a prisoner of war, Diaz was literally hemmed in on all sides by Zouaves and traitor Mexican cavalrymen, who were prepared to kill him at the first sign of an attempt to escape. Although his heart was heavy with the thought that he had yielded the city in which he was

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born to the foreign invaders, his face was calm. Even then, an unarmed prisoner, surrounded on all sides by hostile faces and cold, shining steel, and ignorant of what his immediate fate might be at the hands of men who had slain his countrymen everywhere in cold blood, he was dreaming of an hour when he might once more gain the open country and rally the oppressed and scattered patriots of Mexico to the rescue of their republic.

It was a long and rough journey, and as the brilliant cavalcade of French troops and Mexican renegades moved through the green valleys and over the wild, rocky hills, the terrified peons stood in their villages and silently watched the hero of Oaxaca, the hope of the republic, riding with brave face in the midst of his enemies back to conquered Puebla.

When Diaz and his officers reached Puebla they were turned over for safekeeping to the Austrian forces, who placed them in three different prisons, confining the generals, colonels, and lieutenant-colonels in the fort on the Loreto hill, outside of the city. Presently they were joined by other republican prisoners, among whom were Generals Santiago Tapia and Francisco O. Arce. Here they were held for many weeks.

President Diaz says that while he and his fellows were imprisoned in the Loreto fort representatives of Maximilian rebuked them for their obstinacy and asked them to give their parole not to take up arms against the Intervention or the Empire. Although most of the Mexican officers yielded to this pressure, Diaz refused to sign the pledge or to compromise his right to fight for his country. Among those who stood with Diaz in this refusal were General Tapia, Colonel Sanchez, and Captain Ramon Reguera. Sanchez's answer to the proposal was so offensive that he was removed to a dark cell.

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The French even threatened to shoot some of them in the effort to extort a promise not to draw their swords again in the cause of Mexican independence.

After three months in the fort the imprisoned officers were removed and shut up in the strong convent of Santa Catarina. By pretending to have quarreled with his cellmates, Benitez and Ballesteros, Diaz managed to get a cell for himself.

Never for an instant had the hero relinquished the idea of escaping and resuming the struggle for independence. All through the months in the Loreto fort he had concentrated his mind night and day in an effort to devise some plan through which he might once more face the invaders and traitors sword in hand.

Now that he was alone he at once began to work toward freedom. His cell was over a chapel in which a holy nun had lived. There was in this chapel a well whose water was said to be miraculous. With such implements as he could get, the general bored a hole in the solid cement of the floor under his bed, where it would not be noticed, and then began to cut a horizontal tunnel through a strong wall toward the street. He managed to hide the excavated material in the well. It was slow, painful work, but it at least kept hope alive. Occasionally the Austrian guards saw the prisoner kneeling on the floor of his cell in his well-worn gray uniform and kepi, the Mexican field dress, but they paid little attention to his movements in such an apparently secure place.

Night after night, through five weary months, Diaz toiled from dark to dawn, scraping, digging, boring—piercing the wall inch by inch. It was not alone at the head of charging troops that he knew how to serve Mexico. He could gnaw for months in the dark, through



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cement, earth, and stone, with a patience that never yielded to despair.

No one understood better than he the immensity of the issue which seemed to hang upon his agonizing work. While in Oaxaca he had received only one communication from Juarez's government, and that had been smuggled from Chihuahua into the United States through the Confederate lines, and carried to Washington, from which point the never-resting Mexican Minister, Don Matias Romero, had passed it on to Oaxaca—a total distance of perhaps 4,000 miles. In the hot summer nights, when his hands and arms ached with fatigue, the prisoner knew that Juarez, almost without money or troops, had been compelled to fly with his government to Paso del Norte, on the frontier of the United States.

The fighting power of Southern Mexico must be again aroused and organized. The people would fight to the very death against Napoleon, as they had once fought against Spain, if they could find a general capable of leading them. It was that thought that nerved Diaz as he delved in the night toward the outer wall and liberty, with swollen and aching hands.

After five months of this secret boring, the Mexican officers were suddenly taken from the Santa Catarina convent and imprisoned in the Convent de la Compañía. It was a cruel blow to Diaz, yet he showed no signs of disappointment or despair, but cheerfully began again to plan an escape. This indomitable courage in the teeth of adversity is one of the secrets of his extraordinary leadership. It is not mere fatalism, but such noble and intelligent optimism as roused Robert Bruce from despair when he drew the lesson of perseverance from a patient spider in the island of Rathlin.

There was inspiration, too, in the news from the

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United States. With the surrender of Lee at Appomattox, on April 9th, the monstrous Civil War, in which directly and indirectly 1,000,000 lives and perhaps \$10,000,000,000 were sacrificed, had come to an end, and within six weeks the mighty forces of Grant and Sherman had been dismissed to their homes. There was another tremendous fact in the situation, although neither Diaz nor Juarez knew it. On February 3d, only a few weeks before Lee's surrender, Jefferson Davis, speaking through Confederate commissioners, had proposed to President Lincoln that the North and South, laying aside their differences for a time, should unite their armies to expel Napoleon's invaders from Mexico and enforce the Monroe Doctrine.

Diaz had more liberty in the Convent de la Compañía. The Austrian general, Count de Thun, was away with troops in the mountains near Puebla, and he had left a lieutenant, Baron Juan Csismadia, in command of the city. This lieutenant permitted Diaz to go about the convent freely, invited him to lunch, and even took him to see a bull fight. But the Mexican leader, fearing that he might be suspected of sympathy for the imperialist cause, declined to take any further advantage of Csismadia's chivalrous courtesy.

When the Count de Thun returned to Puebla, he went to the convent prison and called Diaz before a court-martial. He then gruffly ordered him to sign a letter, already prepared by himself, in which Diaz gave instructions to the republican general, Juan Francisco Lucas, that the Mexican traitors held as prisoners by the republican forces should not be executed for their treason, as the imperial government desired to exchange them for republican prisoners, among them, perhaps, Diaz himself. Diaz refused to sign the letter, saying

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that even if he were willing to do so, he, as a prisoner, could not give orders that anyone would be obliged to obey.

“Count de Thun answered reproachfully,” says President Diaz, “that it was strange that I should not be willing to sign the letter when I had actually signed a dispatch in prison and sent it to General Don Luis Pérez Figueroa. This was true; I did not deny it.

“He said that he would never have believed that after seven months’ imprisonment I could be so insolent. My custodian, Baron Csismadia, had run the risk, by allowing me so much liberty, of doing much harm to the imperial government, if I had profited by his favors and escaped.

“I answered that apparently Csismadia knew better than he the character of honorable Mexican officers, with whom Count de Thun had little acquaintance, as he judged them by the character of traitors who accepted Maximilian’s service. I also said to him that the guarantees to Baron Csismadia were sufficient between men of honor.

“That day the Count de Thun went into the prison and commanded that all the shutters should be nailed up, leaving the cells without light. Our confinement was more rigorous. The guard was increased day and night and the sentries were ordered to enter the prisoners’ cells every hour.”

It was this harsh personal persecution by the Count de Thun that increased Diaz’s anxiety to escape promptly.

Meanwhile Maximilian had visited Puebla and made another attempt to negotiate for the sword of his heroic prisoner. The young Emperor had quarreled with the Pope, and now, with a swiftly drying treasury, he was being pressed by the conspirators of Paris to pay the bogus French claims, including the infamous Jecker

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bonds, in which Napoleon's bastard brother was personally interested. The cost of supporting foreign troops in Mexico was increasing enormously. The budget of the Mexican empire for the year had reached the immense sum of \$205,000,000. Preparations were being made to place a new Mexican loan of \$50,000,000 in Paris, although the bonds issued in the previous year were selling at twelve and a half cents on the dollar. Maximilian had in February considered the possibility of abdication, and in June had privately written: "Guanajuato and Guadalajara are threatened. The city of Morelia is surrounded by enemies. Acapulco is lost, and provides by its excellent position an always open road to feed the war and supply the enemy with arms and men."

The commanding general sent for Diaz one day, and when the prisoner appeared in his old gray uniform he was told that the Emperor would like to have a personal talk with him and would make a visit to the prisoners, during which time a special visit would be made to him.

"If Maximilian comes to me," answered Diaz sternly, "he must remember that I will refuse to recognize him as an emperor and will address him only as 'Señor Archiduque.'"

Presently he was informed that he might go secretly in a carriage to see Maximilian. This roused the soldier.

"Say to Maximilian," he answered, with spread nostrils and burning eyes, "that if he desires to have me go to him, I must be taken as a prisoner between armed men."

It was not a mere desire for personal liberty that inspired Diaz to escape from the thick-walled convent in which he was confined. He had managed to communicate with trusted friends and knew that the hour had

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come for action in the field. The eagerness with which the imperial usurper sought to gain his support, renewing his efforts in the face of repeated affronts, proved to him the importance which his leadership had in the eyes of the enemy. Knowing that it was a vital necessity to avoid all cause of conflict with other Mexican generals, he took care, long before attempting to leave his prison, to send his friend and former secretary, Justo Benitez, to Washington to communicate through the Mexican Minister, Don Matias Romero, with President Juarez in distant Paso del Norte. He explained how he had been compelled to surrender the city of Oaxaca to Bazaine, announced that he was ready to escape and take the field again, asked authority to reassume command of the Army of the East, and urged the republican government to send him 5,000 rifles with ammunition, together with a little money to support his soldiers. He proposed to take Oaxaca again, and asked that more arms should be sent to him after that event.

The escape was planned for the night of September 15, 1865, which was the anniversary of Diaz's thirty-fifth birthday, but when he realized that it was also the night before the anniversary of Mexico's Independence Day and that the streets of the city would be lit up for the festival, he changed the date to September 20th.

By this time the prisoner had succeeded in having a horse and equipment secretly bought for him, and these, with a guide and servant, were ready for him at a particular house. Two of his prison confidants, Colonel Guillermo Palomino and Major Juan de la Luz Enriquez, persuaded the other officers to play cards on the night planned for the flight, in order to distract their attention from Diaz's movements.

This thrilling adventure, which was a turning point

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in modern Mexican history, has been told with fascinating simplicity by President Diaz in his memoirs:

“In the afternoon of September 20, 1865, I rolled up three ropes which I had secretly secured to help me in my escape. I put another rope, with a well pointed and sharpened dagger, in my bag [the ropes were passed to him concealed among his clothes]. The dagger was the only weapon I had at my disposal. After the bell rang for silence in the prison that night I went out on an open balcony near the roofs, overlooking an inner courtyard of the convent. It was a place used by all the prisoners, and the sentries paid little attention to movements there. It was a very dark night, but there was clear starlight.

“I had the three ropes wrapped in a gray cloth, and when I was sure that nobody was near I tossed them to the adjoining roof. I then threw the other rope over a projecting stone gutter above and secured it; this was difficult to do because there was not enough light to permit me to see things very distinctly

“When I had tested the strength of the rope and the gutter and was satisfied that my weight would be supported, I climbed up to the roof. Then I unfastened the rope and tied it to the other three ropes which I had thrown up from below. My walk over the roofs to the corner of San Roque, the point I had selected for descending to the street, was exceedingly perilous. Facing me was the roof of a church, so high that it overlooked the entire convent. Here a detachment and a sentry were stationed for the purpose of watching the convent prison.

“Before I had taken many steps I reached a part of the roof where there were many turnings. Each of the convent cells was built inside of a semi-circular arch, and there were corridors between these arches. Advancing and taking advantage of every possible shelter, sometimes crawling on my hands and knees, I groped

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slowly in the direction of the sentry, while searching for the point at which I was to descend. It was necessary for me to move around two sides of the courtyard. Sometimes I had to stop and cautiously investigate the roof over which I moved, for there were loose fragments of glass and tiles which gave out crunching sounds under my feet. Besides, many flashes of lightning lit the sky and threatened to reveal my position.

"At length I reached that portion of the wall where the sentry on the church parapet could not see me, unless he stooped down very low to look. I continued to walk along slowly and reached a high window which opened upon the guard, halting in order to learn if any alarm had been raised. I was in great danger here, for the flooring sloped and its surface was very slippery because of the heavy rains. At one moment my feet slid helplessly to some window panes, which offered but little resistance, and I almost went over the precipice.

"To reach the corner of the street of San Roque, where I hoped to descend, I had to pass over a part of the convent which was used as the chaplain's house. This man had the reputation of having recently denounced to the court-martial the political prisoners, who, in an effort to escape, had cut an outlet in the direction of his house. The result of his denunciation was that they were taken out the next day and shot.

"I let myself down to the roof of the chaplain's house just as a young man who lived there went into the door. He had, no doubt, come from the theater and was merrily humming a tune, and I paused until he had time to reach his room. Soon after he reappeared at the door with a lighted candle and actually crossed toward where I was. I concealed myself so that he should not see me and waited till he returned. He went back to the house after a few minutes, which seemed to me long under the circumstances. When I thought that there was time for him to have got into bed, possibly to have fallen asleep, I mounted to the front roof of the convent,

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on the side opposite to which I had made my ascent, and walked from there to the longed-for San Roque corner, which I reached at last.

“At this corner of the roof was a stone statue of San Vincente Ferrer, which I had thought to use in fastening my rope. The saint tottered much when I touched him; still I assumed that there was probably an iron support to steady him. Yet, for more safety, I did not attach the rope to the statue, but tied it around the base of the pedestal which formed the corner of the building and was apparently strong enough to bear my weight.

“I judged that if I descended into the street at this corner I might be observed by some pedestrian in the act of swinging myself down by my rope. Consequently I decided to descend on the side away from the principal street, which had the advantage of considerable shadow; but I did not know that there was a pigsty below.

“First, my dagger, loosened by the friction made by my shoulders against the wall, dropped from my belt and fell among the pigs. The animals burst into such a squealing that I should have been discovered at once had anyone run to see what was happening. Hiding myself on getting down, I waited for some time until the pigs were quieted. Then, to get to the street, I climbed a low wall which separated me from it. I was suddenly compelled to draw back, for a gendarme was patrolling and investigating the fastenings of the doors below. When he passed I dropped to the street.

“Sweating, agitated and fatigued, I moved vigorously to the house where I had my horses, my servant, and a guide, and reached it without any more stumbling. When I was safely there we all loaded our pistols, got on our horses, and, evading a cavalry patrol, rode out of the city by the Teotihuacan exit. I felt almost sure that the guard at the gate would stop us and made up my mind to fight, but luckily the gate was open. We passed out trotting and when we were clear of the city we galloped.



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“Colonel Garcia was to have waited with his guerilla troops for me in El Paso de Santa Maria del Rio, at the frontier of the state of Guerrero, but as he had been notified that I was to escape on the 15th, and as I had really escaped on the 20th, naturally Garcia was not there.

“Between eight and nine o'clock on the morning of September 21st we reached the ford of the Mixteca River without any notable occurrence. I knew that the imperial forces of Colonel Flon were not far away, and did not abandon my horses or arms. While my servant and guide crossed the river in a boat with the saddles, the men in charge of the baggage rode bareback over the river. I myself took the bridle from my horse and swam the river, holding the mane with one hand and swimming with the other. I then waited on the shore till the horses of my companions were again saddled.”

The fugitives galloped a few miles and reached the town of Coayuca, where Diaz expected to find some of Colonel Garcia's guerrillas. Here he was recognized by the alcalde, who offered to serve him. He moved on, but presently, hearing the hiss of bullets, he and his companions rode to a hill and witnessed a fight in the town. Flon's imperialist squadron had made an attack in the hope of surprising some of Garcia's guerrillas who had gone there to attend a festival. Diaz then rode to Garcia's ranch, fifteen or twenty miles distant.

The Count de Thun was thunderstruck when he found that Diaz had again escaped from Puebla. His anger swelled into a passion of fury when he learned that the Mexican hero had with characteristic coolness and foresight prepared a letter addressed to him and had left it beside the stone statue of San Vincente Ferrer on the roof of the convent from which he so boldly made his way to freedom. The Austrian general, realizing

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the peril involved in Diaz's escape, offered a reward of \$1,000 for his capture, dead or alive.

Lying beside the letter to the Count de Thun, Diaz also left a letter addressed to Major Richard Kerschel, one of the Count's officers, and another to Baron Csismadia. To Major Kerschel he wrote: "I could not reconcile myself to suffer imprisonment for an indefinite period. I vaguely seek liberty or death. In my present situation, and that of my country, the choice is indifferent."

The letter to the Count de Thun, written under such exasperating circumstances, reveals something of the fineness and nicety of Diaz's character which prompted him, in that desperate hour, to desire to leave a good name even among the enemies of his country. It was written six days before his flight:

PUEBLA, September 13, 1865.

"DEAR SIR: Lieutenant Csismadia, who has a just idea of my character, knew how to keep me safe, giving me all the freedom in his power without even taking the liberty to exact my word of honor, which I never would have compromised.

"Toward Csismadia I was only under the obligation, which I tacitly imposed upon myself, of not involving his responsibility, generously and kindly contracted in my favor. I took upon myself nothing of a definitely expressed nature in accepting his generosity, which I did not solicit; however, never have I been more securely confined in my prison than while I enjoyed this generosity.

"But you, who only know Mexicans through passionate reports, who believe that only men without honor and without heart are to be found among them, and that to keep them safe there are no means other than guards and walls, have placed me in absolute liberty, substituting these flimsy bonds for the very strong ties with which Csismadia reduced me to complete inaction.

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“In Papantla and Tuxtepec I have prisoners belonging to the corps which you worthily command, who are accorded the best possible treatment.

“If you desire that we shall arrange an exchange of these for some of my own men, send to Papantla a commissioner with powers to this effect, and I promise that you shall be satisfied with the result.—S. S. Q. S. M. B. [your servant who kisses your hand].

“PORFIRIO DIAZ.

“Sr. General Count de Thun.—Present.”

On the very night when the fugitive hero reached Garcia's ranch, the officials of ten neighboring municipalities came privately to greet him. The reign of terror maintained by the invaders had forced them to be outwardly submissive to the empire, but in their hearts they sympathized with the cause of independence and were eager to serve it; and the sight of their great leader, in his old gray Mexican uniform, with the prison pallor still showing in his face, but the old fighting spirit shining in his eyes, moved them almost to tears.

That night the joyful news was sent over the mountains that Diaz was in the field again.

## CHAPTER XIX

### OAXACA'S HERO RENEWS THE WAR AGAINST MAXIMILIAN

AFTER two nights' sleep at the ranch, Diaz began his third campaign against the invaders and imperialists.

At seven o'clock on the morning of September 22, 1865, he rode rapidly to a spot agreed upon, accompanied by Colonel Garcia, two orderlies, a bugler, and a guide, and there he was joined by eight other fighting patriots. The whole force, when assembled, consisted of fourteen horsemen, some armed with pistols, others with carbines.

This was the new Army of the East.

On that very day he surprised a detachment of the enemy at Tehuitzingo, there swelling his little army to forty men, and with this force on the following evening he daringly attacked a squadron coming out of Pixtala, under Lieutenant-Colonel Carpintero, routing and pursuing it for more than three miles. So hot was Diaz's pursuit that the fugitives abandoned about seventy horses and some arms.

The prison smell had not left his clothes, yet Diaz had won two victories and was pressing the campaign with almost incredible energy. Not an hour was lost, not a point was forgotten. He gathered from Tlapa seventy-eight additional men under Lieutenant-Colonel Cano. Then he was joined by thirty guerrillas, under Tomas Sanchez, in Tepetlapa. An intensely cold storm shut up his force for four days in that small town.

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News came to him that Marshal Bazaine, who well knew the military and political importance of the escaped prisoner of war, had sent two detachments from Puebla in swift pursuit of him. Colonel Visoso, in command of one detachment of 300 infantry and 50 cavalry, was detained by the bitter weather in the city of Tulcingo, not far away.

Before daybreak Diaz was on his way to Tulcingo to fight his pursuers. On reaching that city, he surprised the unsuspecting enemy in a church, where they were quartered, and, although forty of his own men were killed, he defeated Visoso, who fled with his cavalry, leaving his force of infantry prisoners in Diaz's hands, with their arms and ammunition and three thousand gold dollars of their pay money.

Among Diaz's followers was a patriotic brigand chief and several of his men. When the brigand found the chest containing the gold his joy was unbounded, but presently, when the general took the gold from him, he burst into loud lamentations, supposing that he was being robbed unfairly of booty by his leader. Even in those rough surroundings, and in that fierce and bloody moment, Diaz patiently explained to the men that property captured in war could not be taken by any individual for himself, and that this money now belonged to the Constitutional government of Mexico. Then and there he gave his soldiers an object lesson in military accountability and in civilized warfare, by appointing a paymaster and opening an account with the company. These \$3,000 were the beginning of the immense fund which Diaz turned over to President Juarez when he reentered the Mexican capital in triumph through the shining ranks of the victorious Army of the East.

On the next day the general promptly organized into

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two companies all the prisoners who were willing to serve the republic, and, with his army grown a little larger, he marched toward Tlapa, being joined on the way by a small band of armed horsemen from Mixteca. As he advanced, other patriots joined his following.

While marching toward Tlapa, after the fight at Tulcingo, Diaz learned that 1,000 soldiers with 6 guns had joined Visoso and captured Tlapa, beating the republican forces back to the hills. Again he relied upon his shrewdness to make up for his lack of strength.

In studying the wonderful fighting record of this man, one is astonished to see how many of his victories were due to sudden night marches and daybreak attacks, and to clever stratagems which deceived and demoralized his antagonists. With only 300 soldiers in his column and 1,000 of the enemy awaiting him at Tlapa, he now resolved to try another experiment in strategy.

He borrowed 200 men of the National Guard from the republican general Jimenez at Chilapa, in the hills, and marched about raising the men of the towns. These Indian recruits were without arms, but they were formed into bands and marched through the mountains, parallel with the small force of real soldiers. When the Austrian duke Bernard, who was in Tlapa with 700 troops, saw great masses of men appearing over the hills, with the light flashing on the metal musical instruments which they carried, he naturally supposed that they were armed men, and promptly abandoned the town. Having frightened the enemy out of Tlapa, Diaz returned the soldiers he had borrowed from General Jimenez and dispersed the unarmed bands of Indians.

The duke Bernard returned with his forces to Atlixco, placing Colonel Visoso, with about 300 men, in front of that town.

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Diaz had an attack of malarial fever, which lasted only two or three days. When he learned that Visoso knew of this illness, he pretended to grow worse, keeping up the sham of a deadly physical prostration, when he had actually recovered and was preparing to strike another blow. On December 3, 1865, he made a quick night march and at daybreak tempted Visoso into an ambush, and completely defeated him. Diaz personally led a vigorous cavalry attack at the critical moment. Eighty-one of the enemy were killed and enough prisoners were taken to form a new battalion for the service of the republic.

The general then marched through districts of the state of Oaxaca, gathering men, materials and money for his campaign. By this time the enemy had such an exaggerated idea of his military strength that many of their garrisons in the towns fled on his approach. He occupied Silacayoapan and then took Tlaxiaco from General Trujeque. In February, 1866, he marched with General Alvarez to meet a column of imperialists under General Juan Ortega, advancing from Oaxaca. In this march he was almost taken prisoner by the enemy, but through courage and presence of mind he was able to escape and led a gallant and successful charge. Later on he drove Ortega and his troops out of Jamiltepec, pursued him, compelled him to retreat to Oaxaca, and then gathered up hundreds of rifles which Ortega had left behind.

Presently Colonel Visoso, who had been court-martialed at Puebla for the defeats inflicted upon him by the man who had so recently escaped from an imperialist prison, volunteered to serve Diaz and went over to him with 200 men and a mountain cannon.

As Diaz advanced toward the city of Oaxaca his army

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grew larger. The story of his deeds ran through the South as though by magic.

By this time the whole country was thrilled with horror and indignation by the details of a great crime committed by Maximilian's government.

Having failed to reach any compromise, or even to secure an interview with either Juarez or Diaz, the Emperor, on October 2, 1865, issued a lying proclamation, declaring that President Juarez had fled into the United States and that the headless republican forces were now merely bodies of bandits. This was a cold-blooded falsehood. The truth is that on the only occasion when Juarez expected an attack by the imperialist forces on Paso del Norte, he appealed to every man capable of bearing arms to meet the enemy and fight to the bitter end.

"I will never leave my country," he said. "If you are defeated, I will go to the hills, wrap the flag of the republic about me, and await my death on Mexican soil."

On the day after his proclamation falsely announcing the flight of Juarez, October 3, 1865, Maximilian issued a decree almost without a parallel in its deliberate barbarity. Following are the principal articles:

"We, Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, on the advice of our council of ministers and our council of state, decree as follows:

"Persons belonging to armed bands or associations not authorized by law, whether of a political character or not, whatever the number of the band or the nature of its organization or denomination, shall be tried by court-martial, and, if convicted, although only of belonging to such a band, shall be condemned to death, which sentence shall be executed within twenty-four hours.

"Persons described in the preceding article, when



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found using arms, shall be tried by the commandant of the force effecting the arrest, who within twenty-four hours shall cause the crime to be investigated orally, and shall hear the prisoner in his defense. A written record of the investigation shall be made, ending with the sentence, which shall be death if the prisoner be found guilty of belonging to the band. The officer in command shall cause the sentence to be executed within twenty-four hours, permitting the prisoner to receive spiritual consolation. After the execution the said officer shall send the record to the Minister of War.

“Sentences of death for the crimes defined in this decree shall be executed within the period named. No petitions for pardon will be accepted.

“Given at the palace in Mexico, October 3, 1865.

“MAXIMILIAN.”

On October 13th, ten days after this inhuman decree, which sentenced to death every Mexican honest enough to oppose the invasion, Colonel Mendez, with an imperialist force, surprised and beat the republican troops commanded by General Arteaga at Santa Anna Amatlan. Among the prisoners taken were Generals Arteaga and Salazar, Colonels Villagomez, Diaz Parcho, and Perez Milicua, and a number of other officers.

The rank, education, and character of the prisoners—Arteaga had been Governor of Querétaro, was a general of division, and had command of the Army of the Center—induced Mendez to ask the Emperor whether they should be killed under the decree. Even 214 imperialist soldiers who had been taken prisoners in the field by Arteaga and released by exchange, wrote a protest against the proposed murder. Yet, on October 22, 1865, Arteaga and his companions were shot to death at Uruapam. The letters written to their mothers by the two patriot generals on the night before they were thus deliberately murdered

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were heartrending in their dignity and pathos. Mendez was promoted to be a general for this unspeakable service, which no newspaper in Mexico was allowed to mention. Even the United States Government, through its minister in France, protested to Napoleon against such barbarity.

A powerful revulsion shook the country in the beginning of the year 1866. Maximilian, alternately trusting and suspecting the intentions of Napoleon, believed that the great French army in Mexico would be reduced gradually, and although 4,000 troops had already left for Europe, he neglected to build up a military organization of his own, notwithstanding the fact that General Diaz was rousing the South and East and advancing steadily; that General Escobedo with Colonels Trevino and Naranjo were fighting in the North; that General Corona was making headway with his forces in Sinaloa and Sonora, and that Generals Regules and Riva Palacio were still in the field in the interior of the country.

Napoleon and Maximilian had in vain tried to secure a recognition of the usurping empire by the United States. The great northern republic, now free from the embarrassment of the Civil War, pressed Napoleon to withdraw his army from America, and announced in plain speech that the only government which it recognized as a legitimate authority in Mexico was the Constitutional republic of President Juarez. The attitude of the United States became so menacing that Bazaine finally sent troops to the frontier; but the government at Washington turned a still sterner face upon Napoleon, who, recognizing the fact that half a million veteran American soldiers could be hurled against his widely scattered army of invasion, offered to withdraw his forces from Mexico.

With Diaz driving everything before him on his way

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to the heart of the South ; Corona punishing the imperialists at Palos-Prietos and El Presidio ; Terrazas routing the traitor troops in Chihuahua, after their French support had been withdrawn ; Garcia de la Cadena again in the field at Zacatecas ; and Viesca beating the imperialist forces at Parras and Santa Isabel, Marshal Bazaine began to draw his French forces in, and ordered that all isolated expeditions should consist only of the traitor Mexican troops.

Napoleon instructed Bazaine to allow a certain number of French soldiers to volunteer for service in Mexico after the French army should be withdrawn. Thirty-seven thousand traitor Mexican soldiers already in the field, including 12,000 permanent troops, and the auxiliaries, 8,000 men of the foreign legion, and 5,000 volunteers, who were being assembled in Austria, would make a sufficient army to maintain the empire, especially as Maximilian's troops would have 662 siege and field guns to turn against the republicans.

Maximilian was distracted. Napoleon had agreed to leave the foreign legion in Mexico until 1868, and to support the Mexican empire with 12,000 troops for some months after the retirement of Bazaine. But when he made that contract, Napoleon had not foreseen that the United States would have more than 400,000 troops ready for action. Besides, the United States notified the Emperor of Austria that if he permitted any volunteers to embark for Mexico, diplomatic relations would be broken off with his government ; and that ended all hope of relief from Maximilian's brother, for the Austrian Emperor was then preparing to fight Prussia and Italy over the possession of Schleswig-Holstein.

Alas for the fair-bearded Austrian Archduke who sat on the throne of a visionary Mexican empire ! The

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27,000 Mexican auxiliary troops dwindled in the counting to about 12,000, and the 20,000 French soldiers guaranteed by Napoleon were to be replaced by a paltry 3,000 French volunteers.

Meanwhile President Juarez divided the republic into four great military commands, giving the South and East to Diaz, the North to Escobedo, the Center to Regules, and the West to Corona.

Overwhelmed by expenses which he could not meet, Maximilian at first considered the question of renouncing the Mexican crown. Bazaine was withdrawing his troops from distant points and concentrating the French lines back toward the capital. Escobedo defeated General Olvera in Santa Gertrudis. The brave traitor Mexican general Tomas Mejia surrendered Matamoras to the republicans, abandoning 43 guns and escaping to Vera Cruz. Juarez, with his government, returned to Chihuahua, to withdraw no more.

Maximilian wrestled in his shallow, sentimental brain with the problem of abdication. That seemed to be the course pointed out by Napoleon. Later on, Marshal Bazaine tried to persuade him to give up the imperial experiment and go back to Europe with the French army. But it would have taken a larger and braver man than Maximilian to confess openly the folly of his adventure, leave Mexico to its own faithful and heroic people, and face the laughter of the world as a discredited dupe of Napoleon.

The fickle and frightened Emperor of Mexico took advantage of Marshal Bazaine's visit to his forces in the interior to call two French generals, Osmont and Friant, into his Cabinet. Bazaine protested, and Napoleon refused to allow his officers to serve as Mexican Ministers. Maximilian then abandoned all restraint, went over to

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the Clerical enemies of the French, and set up a black reactionary government, secretly controlled by his priest-secretary, the intriguing and masterful Abbé Fischer, with a new Cabinet presided over by Teodosio Lares, an almost mediæval foe of progress, who lived in the shadow of Archbishop Labastida.

Miramón and Márquez, the bloody generals of the Church, were summoned back to Mexico.

## CHAPTER XX

### IN BATTLE AGAIN FOR HIS BIRTHPLACE

DIAZ was more than a soldier in the South and East. He was the life and inspiration of the republic. His fearless devotion to the Mexican cause, his withering answers to the temptations of Maximilian, the manly romance of his escape from Puebla, and his prompt resumption of the war against the empire with an army of only fourteen men, were as well known in the towns and villages as his military resourcefulness, his willingness to take responsibility, his efforts to save the general population from unnecessary burdens, and his personal bravery in battle. Strength and sincerity drew men to his standard.

By February 2, 1866, he had received from President Juarez authority to resume supreme command of the forces in the Southern and Eastern states, and soon he had small columns operating in all directions. In May he indorsed and published Juarez's decree postponing the presidential election to a more convenient time, and provisionally extending the President's term of office. He also supported Juarez in denouncing General Gonzalez Ortega, who as President of the Supreme Court, had refused to consent to the temporary suspension of the election, claimed for himself the right to succeed to the presidency, and headed an abortive rebellion against Juarez.

His forces were still small and his means slender, for it was important not to tax the people too much; yet he

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pressed the campaign in Oaxaca, Puebla, Tlaxcala, and Chiapas. It was a life of constant planning and fighting. Again and again he narrowly escaped death or capture. While he was in Tepeji several columns moved simultaneously to trap him, and he managed to escape to Huajuapam. Then General Trujeque tried to assassinate him by a treacherous ambush, but he moved unhurt out of a shower of bullets.

Having swung into the south of the state of Oaxaca and guarded against movements from Tehuantepec and Yucatan, where the imperialists were eager and active, Diaz moved northward toward his native city of Oaxaca, where great numbers of troops were being concentrated to crush him by sheer weight.

Then came the famous fight of Miahuatlán, on October 3, 1866, in which, with only 600 infantry and 280 cavalry, he outgeneraled and outfought a force of 1,100 infantry and 300 cavalry, with 2 guns, under General Carlos Oronoz, assisted by a French officer, Enrique Testard. This was a brilliant military achievement.

Diaz's force in Miahuatlán was almost out of ammunition and food. His men were demoralized. Terrible rains fell.

He was waiting for encouraging news from his brother, Colonel Felix Diaz, who, having been with President Juarez in Chihuahua, and hearing that General Diaz was free and again in the field, rushed to assist him, organized a force, and, after long and painful marches, was now somewhere on the north side of the city of Oaxaca while his distinguished brother was approaching it from the south.

General Oronoz had moved out of Oaxaca, resolved to destroy Diaz in one action. Again the Mexican leader made up with strategy for his lack of strength. There

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was no time to be lost, and part of his soldiers had less than six rounds of ammunition each.

Diaz placed some of his infantry behind a hill in front of the town, posted forces of riflemen in a ravine at the side of a road, armed peasants in a maguey field on the other side, and sent his cavalry out of town by another route, holding a body of infantry in reserve.

Then he boldly rode to the crest of the hill concealing the arrangement of his forces, and with the members of his staff and about thirty cavalymen, opened fire on the advancing Austrian and French troops.

General Oronoz, deceived by this daring movement, and supposing that he was in touch with the body of Diaz's force, moved forward in battle form, and, catching sight of the republican cavalry, sent his own cavalry in pursuit. Diaz ordered his cavalry to move toward his concealed infantry, and presently the enemy, moving after the republican horsemen, were drawn between two deadly infantry fires and retreated in confusion.

Diaz ordered Colonel Manuel Gonzalez (afterwards President of Mexico) to advance with a detachment of infantry, and while Oronoz was distracted by this movement, the republican cavalry swept around and made a fierce and unexpected attack upon the enemy's rearguard. Then Diaz, with the rest of his infantry, fell upon the Austrians and French. It was a savage struggle, but the Mexicans fixed bayonets and won a complete victory, pursuing the fugitives nearly ten miles.

General Oronoz escaped with some of his principal officers, and the French commander, Testard, was found dead on the battlefield. Among the slain were many Mexicans. The French officers taken in the fight were sent to the hills for safe-keeping, but twenty-two Mexican officers, who had deserted from the republican army and



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entered the enemy's service, were shot, according to the rules in force. In addition to the prisoners, Diaz captured about 1,000 rifles, 2 cannon, and more than 50 mules loaded with ammunition.

With his troops newly organized, Diaz marched for Oaxaca on October 6th. On the next night he rode out alone, attended by a bugler only, to receive a messenger from his brother Felix, who sent word that on approaching the city of Oaxaca from the north he had surprised 50 cavalymen, who covered Tlacolula, and that he was now threatening Oaxaca, having even penetrated to its streets. On the following day came the news that Felix Diaz had occupied a part of Oaxaca and was holding the enemy in the convents of Santo Domingo, El Carmen, and Cerro de la Soledad. General Diaz reached Oaxaca that night, October 8th, and perfected the siege, which was pressed till, on October 16th, the republican lines were so contracted about General Oronoz's troops shut up in the three convents that only one street divided the positions of the republican and imperialist forces.

That day was the threshold of a surprising and decisive event in modern Mexican history. Diaz intercepted a dispatch to General Oronoz ordering him to hold Oaxaca at all hazards, because 1,300 well-armed Austrian veterans under Count Hötse were moving by forced marches to his relief.

It was a critical and confounding situation for Diaz. To permit Count Hötse's army to reach Oaxaca would be to risk the destruction of his own force, which had swollen to 1,600 men, but would have to deal simultaneously with an enemy in the front and the rear. General Oronoz had more than 1,100 troops in Oaxaca, and these, united with the advancing Austrian column, would give the enemy a force of 2,600 men. Yet to turn his back upon Oaxaca

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and march out to meet Count Hötse, would be to let loose the besieged army of 1,100 men on his rear.

The general was sure that the besieged enemy could not receive news from outside and were therefore ignorant that an army was advancing to their rescue. Since General Figueroa was marching with a tired and badly munitioned column to join the republican forces, and must pass obliquely near La Carbonera, where Count Hötse's force would also pass, Diaz decided to take chances on the ignorance of Oronoz, and go out secretly at night to attack the approaching Austrians, and at the same time protect Figueroa's weak force.

This was one of the most intelligently audacious events in the whole history of Diaz's extraordinary military stratagems. That very night he ordered his cavalry to cover the hoofs of their horses with cloth in order to muffle the sound of their movements. He took the guns from their carriages and had them borne forward without noise. Then he secretly moved all his columns in the darkness to Etla. No officer in his force was permitted to know what the other officers were doing. He left the sentries at their posts in Oaxaca, with orders to challenge each other and observe the usual routine, so that the besieged garrisons might not suspect that the republican forces had been withdrawn.

After this secret march to Etla, he pushed on to San Juan del Estado, where he found General Figueroa and his troops, and the two forces were united.

His one fear was that Oronoz might discover his absence, and he sent cavalry back to threaten Oaxaca, so that the besieged troops would not dare to make a sally.

At dawn on October 18th Diaz moved his army to occupy La Carbonera before the Austrian army of relief could reach it. While his forces were moving up a slope

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his scouts reported that the enemy were moving up the other side of the hill. Then followed the battle of La Carbonera, in which Diaz, ably assisted by his brother Felix, General Figueroa, Colonels Segura and Espinosa y Gorostiza, and other officers, won a complete victory over a force of 1,300 picked men, consisting of a battalion of Austrian infantry, two companies of French volunteers, three squadrons of Hungarian cavalry, and two squadrons of traitor Mexicans.

After Count Hötse's force was broken, Diaz in person pursued it for more than two hours, reddening the well-remembered road to his birthplace with blood. In this battle he took more than 700 prisoners and 5 guns.

Not an hour was wasted in rejoicing. Diaz had been for days almost without sleep, but there could be no rest until Oaxaca was taken. He at once returned to the city and arrived there just as General Oronoz learned that a battle had taken place and was waiting for news of the result in order to make a sally with his 1,100 men. He had ordered his commanding officer in the convent of La Soledad to announce the approach of troops from the outside. The signal was to be three shots if the troops were friends and one shot if the troops were enemies.

Strategy followed strategy. It is interesting to read in President Diaz's own words how he managed to avoid a bloody struggle in taking Oaxaca:

“In my front ranks, with republican soldiers on either side, we placed the Austrian prisoners. The commanding officer of La Soledad was deceived by this arrangement and gave the signal to announce the appearance of a friendly column. He promptly tried to correct his mistake when we drew nearer and he saw that we were enemies, but it was then too late. I took the whole line of outposts that I had occupied when I defended the city

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against Marshal Bazaine. The two forces continued firing intermittently until midnight."

General Oronoz surrendered Oaxaca unconditionally with 1,100 fully equipped men, depots of arms and ammunitions, and 30 fixed and mountain guns. Diaz entered the city with his troops on October 31st, and enrolled a large part of the captured forces in his own battalions. An interesting illustration of his character is to be found in the fact that when he occupied Oaxaca, he advanced two colonels to the rank of general, but declined to promote the valiant Colonel Felix Diaz, because that officer was his brother. The republican government afterwards conferred the rank of general on Felix.

Money was badly needed at that time, for the soldiers of the republic had received no pay, and the people could stand no further draughts upon their scanty means; indeed, many of the peasants were almost on the verge of starvation.

With this stern problem staring him in the face, Diaz promptly seized the marvelous jewels of the Virgin of La Soledad, whose dazzling beauty and unspeakable costliness had overwhelmed him when he was a barefoot boy preparing for the priesthood—the solid gold crown blazing with emeralds and diamonds; the corselet of precious stones quivering on gold wires; the ropes and necklaces of flashing gems and rare pearls; the wonderful chalice; the gold stomacher, incrustated with emeralds, diamonds, and pearls; the great black velvet dress, stiff with massive embroidery of countless fine pearls; the blazing, twinkling heaps of crosses and rings set with rubies, emeralds, and other gems.

This treasure, valued at \$2,000,000, was carefully guarded until the Church ransomed it by paying \$20,000,

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which Diaz used to relieve the poverty of his exhausted army. For fifty years afterwards the hiding place of these jewels was a carefully kept Church secret.

Although the general allowed his volunteer soldiers to return to their homes to see their families and heal their wounds, requiring them to serve as local National Guards during their rest in the small towns, and Figueroa moved back with his army to the mountains of Tuxtepec, he gave himself no rest. He organized the government of Oaxaca and studied the enemy's position to the south of him.

In the beginning of December, 1866, after many days of exhausting work, Diaz marched with 1,200 men to Tehuantepec, determined to strike in every direction, in order that the enemy might not have a rearguard. At El Tablon he and his brother Felix defeated the enemy's rearguard of 1,300 troops, driving them into the mountains, and by January, 1867, he was back in Oaxaca with the main body of his army. In the latter part of that month, having organized his forces for the campaign against Puebla, drawing troops from the states of Tlascalala, Mexico, Puebla, and Vera Cruz, Diaz left Oaxaca on January 26th, headed for the city of Puebla.

But to understand the meaning of the great victories which the restless hero of Oaxaca was about to win, it is necessary to know something of the extraordinary events that were succeeding each other in the tragic, bewildering fortunes of Maximilian and his young Empress.

## CHAPTER XXI

### NAPOLÉON DESERTS MAXIMILIAN—BAZAINE TEMPTS DIAZ

It was in December, 1865, that Secretary Seward, still suffering from the wound he received on the night of President Lincoln's assassination, notified Napoleon III that the friendly relations of France and the United States would be endangered unless France should "desist from the prosecution of armed intervention to overthrow the republican government existing there [Mexico] and to establish upon its ruins the foreign monarchy which has been attempted in the capital of the country," and "leave the people of the country to the free enjoyment of the republican government they have established for themselves, and of their adhesion to which they have given what seems to the United States to be decisive and conclusive as well as touching proofs."

In the desire to minimize this chivalrous action of the United States Government, many serious writers have asserted that in the very same month Mr. Seward went to the island of St. Thomas to negotiate for the sword of the notorious Santa Anna for service in Mexico. Nothing could be falser. When Mr. Seward went to the West Indies on the advice of his doctors, he was entirely ignorant of the fact that Santa Anna was living there in exile. It was a mere vagary of some one's imagination to attribute any political significance to the interview between Mr. Seward and Santa Anna, which

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was sought for by that dishonorable Mexican adventurer. The truth is that Santa Anna was regarded as a pretentious humbug by the government at Washington.

After the former dictator had gone to New Jersey and issued a bombastic address to the Mexican nation, he had the impudence to offer his services to President Juarez's government, which repelled him with contempt.

In March, 1867, when Diaz's army was sweeping from Oaxaca to the final victories of Puebla and Mexico City, Santa Anna sent to Mr. Seward an agent named Gabor Naphegyi, with an elaborate written commission designating him as Santa Anna's "Minister at Washington." The Mexican exile grandly set forth in this document his various decorations and titles—"General of Division of the Armies of Mexico; Grand Master of the National and Distinguished Order of Guadalupe; Grand Cross of the Spanish Order of Carlos III; General in Chief of the Liberating Army of the Mexican Republic," etc.—and authorized his "minister" to issue Mexican bonds "to the amount of ten millions of dollars," and to "negotiate with the United States for the sale of any portion or portions of the Territory of Mexico."

Secretary Seward refused to receive Naphegyi and sent an assistant to say that the United States could recognize only the government of President Juarez, and that in its dealings with the Mexican question it had no desire to gain any selfish advantage, but was actuated by sincere convictions. Naphegyi had definitely proposed the transfer of the sovereignty of Sonora and Lower California as the price of support to be given to Santa Anna by the United States.

The efforts of the picturesque Mexican traitor to secure recognition from the United States when the

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government at Washington had practically ordered Napoleon to leave Mexico, and had sent General Sheridan with an army corps to the Mexican frontier, have been treated with much gravity by ignorant or malicious anti-American historians; but Secretary Seward did not consider them even a respectable joke.

Napoleon had to take his army out of Mexico. His vast scheme for a reconquest of America was a hopeless failure. Yet his guilty soul shrank from a confession to the world of such a disaster to his prestige. His one burning desire was to conceal the fact that he had been compelled to retreat. On January 22, 1866, he attempted to deceive Europe by announcing to the French parliament that as the Mexican empire was already established and its opponents without a leader, the French army, having accomplished its object, would soon retire from Mexico.

Through Marshal Bazaine, Napoleon attempted to persuade Maximilian to renounce his crown. By abdicating, the young Emperor would take from Napoleon's shoulders all responsibility for the failure of the Mexican empire and place it upon his own. Anything would be better than to allow Europe to know that the successor of Napoleon the Great, having set out to overthrow the Monroe Doctrine, had withdrawn his soldiers from America in the face of a threat from the United States.

As Bazaine gradually drew the French forces from the interior of Mexico, he kept secretly pressing Maximilian to give up the experiment of governing the Mexicans. Although he had been notified that the French army would be completely withdrawn by the end of 1867, and Bazaine's preparations for retirement from the country were carried on openly, Maximilian could not at first believe that Napoleon would abandon him.

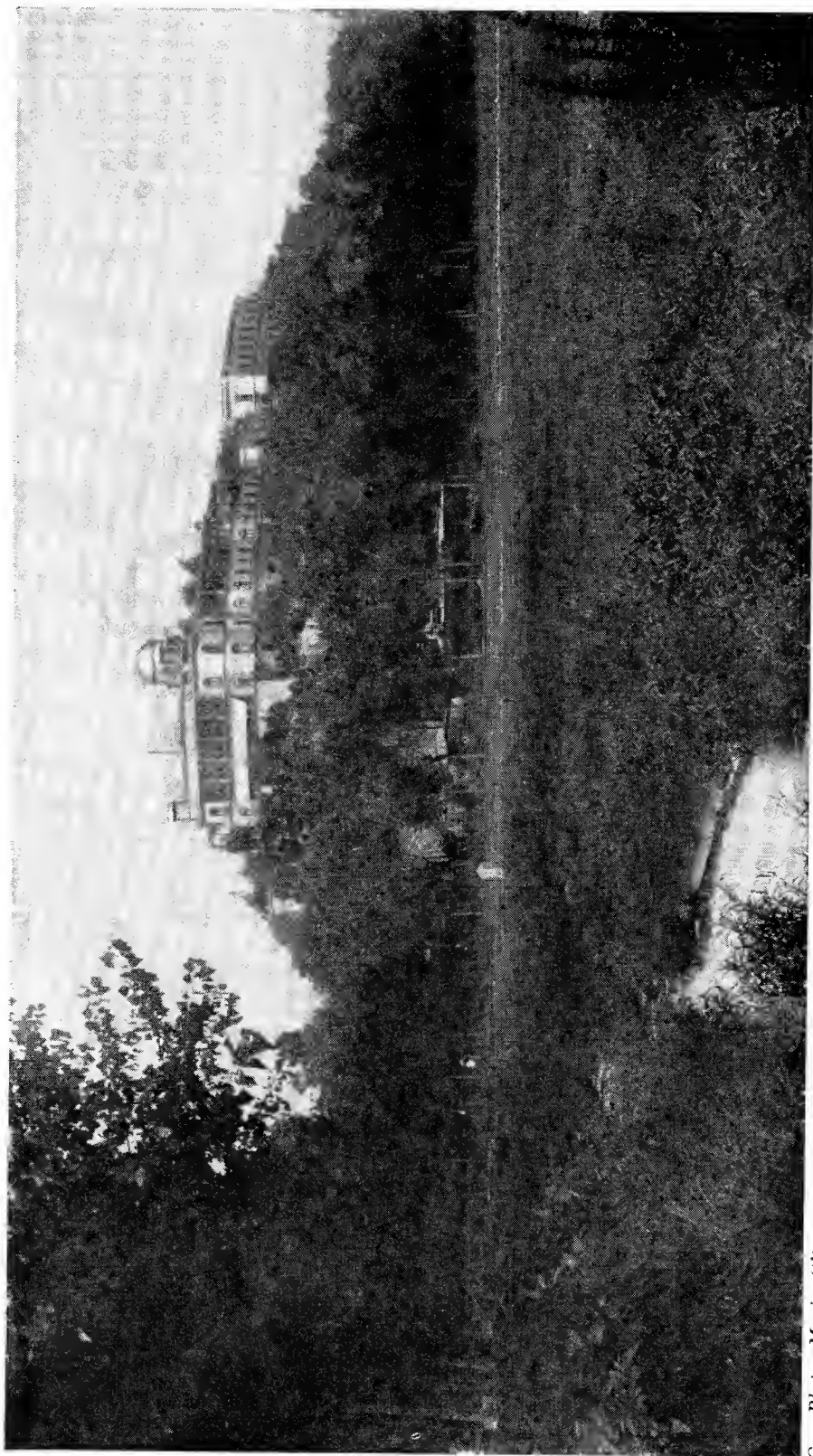


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Yet events began to stagger his confidence. As the French troops fell back toward the center, the republicans advanced from the North and South toward the capital. The imperial treasury was empty; all the local treasuries in Mexico had been plundered; guerrilla bands were ravaging the towns and villages in all parts of the country; the heterogeneous troops upon which the empire must depend for support after Bazaine sailed for Europe had not been paid and were resorting to vulgar brigandage. Still, Bazaine, intent on saving his imperial French master's pride, continued to urge Maximilian to abdicate. The wily marshal was seeking for a chance to negotiate with some provisional Mexican government for a recognition of the French debt before taking his army back to Europe. That would be an unanswerable excuse for Napoleon's retreat.

Slowly the ghastly truth began to dawn on the mind of Maximilian, and the laughter died down in his gay court. He had quarreled with the Pope, and the Church had forsaken his cause; he had tried in vain to negotiate with President Juarez; he had many times sued for the sword of Diaz and had received only insults and threats in reply; he had turned to the United States for recognition, only to be coldly ignored. Now, with a bankrupt treasury, and even his imperial brother in Austria helpless to assist him, Napoleon was about to abandon him to the care of a motley, unpaid Mexican traitor soldiery, assisted by a few French volunteers and a handful of Austrian and Belgian troops.

Early in July, 1866, the Emperor of Mexico suddenly awoke to the extreme peril of his position and was about to sign a renunciation of his crown. Just then the beautiful young Empress Carlota made an appeal to him which shook his resolution. She was only twenty-



*Cox, Photo., Mexico City.*

CHAPULTEPEC CASTLE, THE SUMMER RESIDENCE OF PRESIDENT DIAZ.



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six years old, but had already begun to dabble in affairs of state. Carlota persuaded Maximilian to permit her to go at once to Paris and attempt to persuade Napoleon to keep the contract he had made when her husband accepted the Mexican crown. She insisted that when Napoleon was confronted with his solemn obligations, he would not take the French army out of Mexico. She would also go to the Pope and plead with him for a restoration of the Church's powerful support. The daughter of the Belgian king had a masterful character, in spite of her youth, and Maximilian, almost crazed by disappointments and disasters, surrendered himself to her characteristic woman's plan of an appeal to the personal feelings of Napoleon and of Pius IX in a matter involving the fortunes of three nations.

With this extraordinary scheme in her young mind, Carlota sailed from Vera Cruz on July 13, 1866, accompanied only by Madame Del Barrio, one of her ladies in waiting. It is said that when she started from Chapultepec Castle there was not enough money in the imperial treasury to pay for her trip, and it was necessary to take money from the special funds held for the protection of the capital against sudden floods.

Madame Del Barrio afterwards wrote a pathetic account of Carlota's journey to Paris and futile interview with Napoleon.

"Her majesty was in a state of great nervous excitement bordering on insanity even before we neared the coast of France in that unhappy summer of 1866. It is generally assumed that her mental malady first asserted itself during her interview with the Pope, October 4th of that year. The fact is that her majesty became a raving maniac in the castle of St. Cloud.

"These are the circumstances: When our steamer

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landed at Brest there was nobody to offer a royal welcome, or any kind of welcome. Neither the French Government nor the Belgian Embassy was represented. The same happened upon our arrival in Paris. The Empress trembled from head to foot as she stepped into the hired coach that brought us to our hotel.

"The day passed without a word from Emperor Napoleon. On the second day the Empress Eugenie's chamberlain came to invite her majesty to breakfast at St. Cloud. She refused the invitation, but said she would come to St. Cloud the following afternoon. At the castle my mistress and their majesties of France were closeted for an hour longer, I remaining in the ante-room.

"Suddenly I heard the Empress Carlota cry out in agonized tones, which were full of contempt at the same time, 'Indeed I should have known who you are and who I am. I should not have dishonored the blood of the Bourbons in my veins by humbling myself before a Bonaparte, who is nothing but an adventurer.'

"A second later I heard a sound as if a heavy body had struck the floor. I ran to the door, which was locked, but after a little while the Emperor Napoleon came out with a troubled face. On entering I found my mistress on a lounge, and kneeling by her side the Empress Eugenie, who was rubbing her hands and feet. She had opened her corsets, had pulled off her stockings, and, in short, done everything to arouse her from the fainting spell.

"The Emperor's statement that he could do nothing for his majesty of Mexico had brought on this trouble, said Eugenie. Then she got up to get a glass of water, but as she held it to my mistress's lips, the Empress Carlota awoke and threw the water over her friend's dress, crying: 'Away, cursed murderer; away with your poison!' and then falling on my neck she added: 'You are witness to this plot. They want to poison me. For God's sake, do not leave me.'"

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Hurrying to Rome, Carlota drove to the Vatican, and, in spite of the protests of the chamberlains against her informality, the proud young mistress of Chapultepec Castle burst into the presence of Pius IX, wild-eyed and haggard. With tears streaming down her face she said that Napoleon's agents were trying to poison her and that she was afraid to take the food set before her. At this she threw a handful of chestnuts on the astonished Pope's table and declared that she had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours but a few nuts which she had bought in the streets, and had not dared to drink anything but water drawn by her own hands from a public fountain. Pius, much distressed, had a beefsteak cooked for her immediately, and in his presence she ate it ravenously.

In the evening Carlota returned to the Vatican, but was informed that the Pope had gone to bed. She insisted upon sleeping in an improvised bed in the library of the apostolic palace that night. For several days afterwards she refused to eat anything but eggs laid in her presence by hens kept in the drawing-room of her suite in the hotel, explaining to her attendants that although Napoleon's poison could not penetrate through the shell of an egg, the contents of the egg might be affected by administering poison to the hen.

Presently she was removed by her family to Belgium, where she was shut up, raving mad, in a castle; and there she is living, even to-day, a white-haired, feeble prisoner of seventy years, still ignorant of the bloody death of the husband whose throne she tried to save.

It was while Maximilian was waiting for news from Carlota that he yielded to the influence of his sinister priest-secretary, the Abbé Fischer, and, made desperate by Bazaine's steady preparations to remove his army

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from the United States, threw himself into the arms of the Church party.

In this time of frantic devices, Maximilian suddenly received a message announcing the failure of his wife's mission to Napoleon and conveying the still more terrible news that she had gone mad. The blow shattered his proud obstinacy, and at two o'clock in the morning of October 21, 1866, he hurried from Mexico City to Orizaba, on the way to Vera Cruz, where an Austrian man-of-war, sent for the purpose by the Emperor of Austria, was waiting to take him back to Europe.

Nothing seemed to discourage Maximilian in the hope that somehow he might win over to himself the sword of Diaz. The scornful and indignant replies which the Oaxacan made to every offer from the Emperor seemed to have no effect. When the general was in Acatlan, with an escort of 300 men, preparing to concentrate forces for the advance on Puebla, he received another communication from Maximilian who was then contemplating an abandonment of the Empire, and yet grasping at everything which seemed to promise safety. The story is told by President Diaz in his memoirs:

"One day the advance guard from Acajete brought across the mountains to my quarters, with all usual precautions, a man named Carlos Bournof. According to credentials which he carried, he was commissioned by Maximilian personally to secure my promise not to oppose him in a march which he was about to make from Mexico City to Vera Cruz, assuring me that he would take with him only European soldiers and that his purpose was to embark with them in the frigate *Novara*, then anchored at Vera Cruz.

"Bournof asserted that this was all Maximilian had instructed him to say, but he announced on his own account that Maximilian esteemed me highly, and that if

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he could rely upon my co-operation he would be ready to dismiss his Conservative advisers and the military men of that party at his side, and put himself in the hands of the Liberals, because at heart he agreed with our political principles. The envoy said that Maximilian had great respect and admiration for Señor Juarez and for the principles which he professed, but that in view of the attitude which Juarez maintained in considering the imperialists as antagonists, it was impossible for the Emperor to make his sentiments known and he was therefore obliged to act, not as he wished, but as circumstances compelled. Bournof then intimated that I could be commander-in-chief of all the imperial forces.

“The thought came to me that M. Bournof had been prompted by Maximilian to make these statements, notwithstanding his assurances that he was merely expressing his own opinion. I held M. Bournof that night, and in the morning sent him back with a verbal answer, saying that I could not make concessions of any kind to the enemy; that my only duties to Maximilian were to strike him or be struck by him; that I was making preparations to this end, and that I would promise to make him prisoner and submit him to the law of the nation.

“All night we feigned the marching of troops through the streets near which Bournof was detained. The soldiers were accompanied by officers who saw to it that no windows were open. I wanted to send Bournof back to Maximilian with the idea that I had a great force of troops quartered in Acatlan and that trains were constantly coming in and going out of the town. Actually I had only 300 mounted men with me, although I could secure help from the towns in the districts of Matamoras, Tepeji, and Tepeaca, which were friendly to the republic. Many of them had taken up arms and were keen to join in any fight in their respective localities.”

Strangely enough, on his flight to Orizaba, the now demoralized and grief-stricken Maximilian received a



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communication from Napoleon's aid-de-camp, General Castelnau, who had been sent from Paris to demand the immediate abdication of the Emperor of Mexico. Maximilian declined to receive Napoleon's messenger. He was then informed by Bazaine that he would not be permitted to leave the country until he renounced the crown.

The imperial criminal of the Tuileries had apparently resolved to conceal the true reason for the retreat of the French army from Mexico even if it should be necessary to lay violent hands upon his crowned victim. Already the embarrassment of having a large French army in America had prevented Napoleon from interfering in the struggle between Prussia and Austria for supremacy in the confederation of German states. The battle of Sadowa had given the leadership of Europe to the Prussian king, who, four years later, was to take the Emperor of the French a prisoner to Wilhelmshöhe, and send him thence an exile to England. Napoleon's dream of an Italian confederation, headed by the Pope, under French domination, had also faded away, and the French troops were being withdrawn from the Papal territories.

His reputation as the most brilliant and powerful politician in Europe would be completely shattered and his name would become a jest, even in France, if it should become known that his expedition to Mexico was a complete failure, and that the great French army had been withdrawn from America, not in triumph, but in abject humiliation. Therefore, Maximilian must resign, so that Napoleon might obtain a treaty with the Mexican republic securing the payment of the monstrous French claim—which treaty would enable Napoleon to boast that the French army had gloriously accomplished its mission.

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Summoning his ministers to Orizaba, Maximilian asked their advice. He was urged to return to the capital and defend his crown. The Church party agreed to furnish \$30,000,000 at once for the prosecution of the war. His secretary, the Abbé Fischer, exerted his evil influence to the full. The Belgian engineer, Eloin, upon whom Maximilian strongly relied, also threw his weight in favor of the Church plan. On November 10th Marquez and Miramon, the notorious Church generals, reappeared in Mexico and agreed to join with Tomas Mejia in a crushing campaign against the Juarez government on condition that they should have unlimited authority to raise troops and make forced loans.

In a fatal moment Maximilian again changed his mind. In a proclamation issued on December 1, 1866, he made known to the Mexican nation that he had resolved to remain at his post to the end, and on December 12th he returned to the City of Mexico. On the next day he ordered that in addition to the existing imperialist forces, there should be formed three army corps, to be commanded by Marquez, Miramon, and Mejia. Marquez was appointed commander in chief in the capital and threw himself with great energy into the work of recruiting troops. Mejia went to Querétaro to organize a new force. Miramon, accompanied by 400 men, mostly leaders and officers, moved out into the country toward Querétaro with the intention of creating a fresh division of troops, with which later on he surprised a republican force at Zacatecas.

By this time Maximilian's defiant attitude toward Napoleon was bitterly emphasized. When Bazaine marched out of the capital on his way to France, at the head of the French forces, his bands were playing and his colors flying. Maximilian ignored him and his army.

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No escort was furnished to Napoleon's representative as he departed; no salute was fired, no bell rung, no farewell word said. The march was through silent streets and sullen spectators. As the long stretches of French bayonets moved by the national palace, Bazaine saw that every window was curtained. Even Maximilian refused to appear, and watched the exit of the French army from behind a curtain, without a word of thanks for the blood that had been shed in defense of his sovereignty.

Before sailing from Vera Cruz, Bazaine made a last attempt to save Napoleon from the disgrace of a complete defeat by a covert appeal to the ambition of General Diaz. President Diaz has told in his memoirs how the cunning marshal's final effort to buy his conscience came about.

After capturing Oaxaca, and before leaving with his army to attack Puebla, Diaz sent to Marshal Bazaine about 1,000 of the European soldiers he had taken in the field, with the stipulation that they should be at once embarked at Vera Cruz. His representative on this occasion was Colonel José M. Perez Milicua, whose interpreter was a Frenchman named Carlos Thiele.

Infuriated by Maximilian's refusal to abdicate, and thus leave the way open for a dignified French withdrawal, Bazaine was eager to assist secretly in pulling down the empire which Napoleon had set up. He revealed his plan to Thiele.

"Marshal Bazaine authorized him," says President Diaz, "to say to me that he would sell to me muskets, ammunition, clothing and equipment at a dollar for a musket, a dollar for a linen uniform, with boots; and horses and mules, with full harness, at equally low prices.

"I knew by this offer, and by the destruction of

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stores which he was making, that Bazaine had no means of carrying them to Vera Cruz and that he probably had no room in his ships for them. I refused to purchase the supplies because the enemy had to leave them, and it would be better to seize them than to pay even a low price.

“I notified all the garrisons that anything the enemy might leave in the country was contraband of war. A large fine was provided for holders or receivers of such contraband, and I ordered that the fines would be paid to the informers, whose names would be kept secret. This announcement produced extraordinary results, and made it possible for me to turn over to President Juarez when he arrived in the capital in 1867, 21,000 soldiers, well clothed, well armed, and well munitioned, the bulk of their equipment having been thus secured from the French.”

President Diaz informed the author of this book that Bazaine offered to make a treaty with him by which France would secure certain guarantees. The marshal insisted that Juarez had ceased to be the head of the republic and was actually in the United States. His one desire was that France should not seem to be leaving the country out of fear of the United States. Diaz refused to commit himself and promptly communicated Bazaine's proposal to President Juarez.

“Bazaine asked Thiele to say to me,” says President Diaz, “that on leaving Mexico City for the coast he would stay at Ayotla, which he actually did, and that if I should make an attack on the capital while he was still there, he wished me to send him through Thiele a description of my soldiers' uniforms so that they could be distinguished from Maximilian's soldiers. In such a case he would return to the capital under the pretense of restoring order, so that things could be arranged for him and for me.

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“My understanding of this message was that he would help me to take the capital, where Maximilian then was, if I would, for my part, consent practically to disown the government of Señor Juarez, so that France might deal with another government before taking her forces out of Mexico. His exact words were these: ‘Say to General Diaz that I will repay him with usury for the éclat with which our flag would thus leave Mexico.’

“I did not consider it expedient to continue relations which had for their object an exchange of prisoners, but had been stretched to this point, and I so informed Thiele as my only answer to Bazaine.’

This extraordinary scheme to shield the name of Napoleon, and at the same time discredit Juarez, was reported by Diaz to Don Matias Romero, the distinguished Mexican Minister at Washington, for President Juarez’s information, in the following words:

“General Bazaine, through a third party, offered to surrender to me the cities which they occupied, and also to deliver Maximilian, Marquez, Miramon, etc., into my hands, provided I would accede to a proposal which he made me, and which I rejected, as I deemed it not very honorable. Another proposition was also made to me, by authority of Bazaine, for the purchase of 6,000 muskets and 4,000,000 percussion caps; and if I had desired it, he would have sold me both guns and powder.”

Then, on the very day when the French army left Mexico City, Maximilian had the walls placarded with an announcement that the government of the capital was in the hands of Marquez, the slayer of helpless prisoners. Before sailing for Europe, Bazaine offered to furnish General Castegui with an armed force to escort Maximilian to a ship waiting for him at Vera Cruz. But the

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blond poet and dilettante, now surrounded by Clerical advisers, had decided to attempt the conquest of Mexico on his account, and to maintain his crown through the swords of Marquez, Miramon, and Mejia, and the millions promised to him by the bishops, who, terrified by the thought of a republican triumph and a restoration to power of President Juarez, had returned to Maximilian as their last hope.

## CHAPTER XXII

### DIAZ DESTROYS MAXIMILIAN'S POWER IN BATTLE

MORE than 40,000 Mexican patriots were in the field against Maximilian in February, 1867. These were almost entirely Indians, speaking many different tongues and often unable to converse with each other save in Spanish, yet stirred into a common consciousness by their love of country.

Foreigners visiting Mexico have been astonished to discover that there is no race question there. The Indian is not looked upon as an inferior by the white man. The Mexican of European descent may deplore the mental sloth, the superstition, and the political indifference or incapacity for civic progress which generally mark the descendants of the prehistoric Americans as unfit to be trusted with the actual management of the nation, in their present backward condition; but he remembers that they are sprung from ancient, independent, and civilized races, he strongly appreciates their gentle and lovable, if helpless, qualities; and he does not forget how many times, and how bravely, they have fought for Mexican independence.

While the patriot Indian soldiery moved, without outrage or robbery, toward the capital—controlled in the North by the Indian president Juarez, and directed in the South by the part-Indian soldier Diaz—Maximilian and his generals, with their forces of Austrians, Belgians, Nu-

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bian blacks from the Soudan, Mexican renegades, and riff-raff hireling volunteers from many lands, sank to the level of highwaymen in their methods. They recruited soldiers by forcing passing citizens into the ranks. The treasuries everywhere were looted. The police attacked the houses of merchants by night and broke into their money chests.

The saturnalia of official plundering grew more and more barbarous, and at times women and children were shut up in houses without food or water until they were ransomed by their relatives. Horsemen were stopped in the streets and their entire equipment taken from them. Two important business houses had to surrender a quarter of a million dollars between them to Maximilian's marauding officers.

Not only was this systematic robbery carried on in the name of the Emperor of Mexico, but when Miramon, having won a small victory over the patriots at Zacatecas, reported that he expected to capture President Juarez and his government, Maximilian ordered him to see to it that Juarez and his principal ministers and generals should promptly be condemned by a court-martial when they were caught. It was only the defeat of Miramon by General Escobedo at San Jacinto that prevented the execution of Maximilian's bloodthirsty and heartless order.

The whole country was in an uproar of indignation as news of the imperialist atrocities reached it, and the soldiers of the republic pushed forward swiftly to the rescue of the cities still in the hands of the oppressors. Generals Corona and Escobedo were marching southward, and the Juarez government returned toward the capital behind the advancing republicans. In the South General Diaz, having stationed troops to guard all the dangerous points in the vast territory committed to his care, was concen-



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trating forces to strike the city of Puebla and then move on to take the capital.

Maximilian was in a trap. By this time he had experience enough to know that when Diaz and his men advanced, it would be impossible to resist him. Both Puebla and Mexico City must fall before the onset of the Oaxaca hero. In a state of bewilderment he asked his Cabinet to advise him what to do; and his ministers, assisted by Marquez and Mejia, persuaded him to put himself as commander in chief at the head of his troops and march out of the capital to make a concentration of force at Querétaro. At this time the empire could count only on the cities of Mexico, Puebla, and Vera Cruz, and had nominally 20,000 troops, including the force of Losada, the mighty bandit chief, who, however, presently weakened Maximilian's support by declaring himself a strict neutral in the struggle.

So, accompanied by his ministers, Maximilian left Mexico City with Marquez and 2,000 troops, and on February 19th entered Querétaro, where a special *Te Deum* was sung in his honor in the Cathedral.

Mejia and Miramon were both in Querétaro with their troops, so that Maximilian had something like 9,000 soldiers at his immediate command in Querétaro; but when the republican army under Corona and Escobedo besieged that city, Marquez escaped by night with 400 cavalry and hurried to Mexico City, having been named by Maximilian Lieutenant of the Empire. General Vidaurri accompanied him. In the capital Marquez formed a garrison of 1,000 mounted Austrians, 300 French volunteers, two bodies of chasseurs, and 2,300 traitor Mexicans.

Diaz had already begun his last glorious march against the imperialists. Having repelled Maximilian's final

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secret appeal for his support, he united the forces of General Figueroa, General Gonzalez, Colonel Palacios, General Alatorre, General Juan N. Mendez, and other officers, and with 4,000 soldiers moved on to the fortified city of Puebla. It was provided with trenches and forts and defended by a garrison of more than 3,000 soldiers, under the Mexican general Noriega.

Diaz and his forces arrived in front of Puebla on March 9, 1867. He at once occupied the hill of San Juan, on the same day taking possession of the convent of San Fernando. He extended his investing lines south and east but did not inclose the northern line of the city, because the forts on the hills of Loreto and Guadalupe were heavily defended with artillery. He occupied the principal suburbs of Puebla and kept up a steady fire on the city. His forces grew stronger as reinforcements arrived from day to day.

During these operations the enemy set fire to a store in that part of the outskirts of the city occupied by the republicans, and Diaz in person attempted to extinguish the flames. Suddenly the roof caved in. The general jumped for the door, but was buried to the waist in cinders and wreckage. The door fell and exposed him to the imperialist soldiers, who fired so close to him as to scorch his clothes. Diaz's men managed to dislodge the enemy, but marksmen on the opposite side of the street kept on shooting at him, and he was powerless to move, although his clothes were on fire. Colonel Luis Teran, an officer who afterwards played an important part in Diaz's life, attempted to save his general and pulled him by the arms, but failed to stir him. Diaz faced what seemed to be certain death with a calm face; but an adjutant managed, with the assistance of a cannon lever, to raise the wooden beam pressing on him, and he was

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lifted out, leaving his boots in the cinders. He was not seriously hurt, although he was badly bruised and burnt.

A rumor that he had been killed spread among his troops and demoralized them. Diaz then mounted his horse and showed himself before the lines. The soldiers burst into a frenzy of shouting and cheering when they saw their hero alive. The demonstration was an extraordinary tribute, and the general was so moved by it that he could not speak a word.

Toward the end of March, General Noriega sent word from Puebla to Marquez that Diaz had him in a tight place, that two of his generals were wounded, one of his battalion commanders killed, and the whole population of the city hostile to him. Marquez would either have to rush troops to the rescue of Puebla, and if he won, unite all the forces of the empire, or let Puebla fall and move with the forces in the capital to Querétaro, abandoning everything else.

In the face of this situation, Marquez decided to go immediately to the relief of Puebla. With marvelous activity he increased the garrison of Mexico City so that it could defend itself, and on March 30th he hurried out with an army of 4,000 men of the three arms of the service and 20 guns, and started for Puebla to annihilate Diaz's besieging army.

On the next day Diaz received news of Marquez's march against him. He instantly recognized the gravity of his position. Should Marquez reach him before he took Puebla, the republican troops would have to fight twice their numbers and would probably be cut to pieces, being caught between two powerful forces, numbering more than 7,000 men in all. On the other hand, if he went out to meet Marquez, the imperialist garrison of Puebla would probably follow and attack him in the rear

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while he was engaged with Marquez's strong relief column.

In that dilemma the general decided to attempt to take Puebla by storm, in spite of its forts and trenches. It was the only chance of escape from a terrible disaster, for if Marquez should succeed in destroying the republican army besieging Puebla, he would be able to march with the combined imperialist forces to save Maximilian at Querétaro. With his usual sagacity he decided to surprise Puebla by a night assault.

No more brilliant strategic action was ever fought on Mexican soil, and there is no more convincing proof of Diaz's military genius than the plan through which he successfully stormed the almost impregnable position of his enemy, a fortified city which only four years before 30,000 picked French troops had not been able to take from the republicans until their garrison was starved into surrender.

Although he began to send his sick, wounded, and stores on the road to Tehuacan, so that they might be safe in the event of his defeat, he was careful to conceal his intention to attack Puebla, and no one knew of his plan until the night of April 1st, a few hours before he opened fire. Not even his officers were taken into his confidence.

"If my soldiers had surmised what was to happen, they might have revealed the secret and ruined everything," says President Diaz. "If the enemy had been prepared, the sacrifice of lives in the assault might have been useless."

On the night of April 1st Diaz called the commanders of his forces together in a house at the center of his lines, where he assigned the attacking columns, indicated the

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trenches to be seized, and with a detailed knowledge gained by his former experiences in defending Puebla, pointed out the very walls and doors that must be broken in entering the city.

As the Convent del Carmen was one of the most distant points from the plaza in the area defended by the imperialists, he decided to make a false attack upon it in order to divert the enemy's forces from the real fighting positions. He then formed seventeen attacking columns of about 140 men each, assigning three of them to the strategic feint at the Convent del Carmen and concentrating his artillery in front of the intrenchments at the convent.

Observing that the imperialists had not protected their intrenchments in the rear he arranged his attack so that his infantry fire missing the first trenches in the elliptical line of defense, would reach the rear of the enemy's trenches on the other side, and, perhaps, in the darkness, throw them into confusion and convince them that he had forced their lines from the rear.

"The three columns assigned to the false attack on the Convent del Carmen were placed close to the artillery, partly protected from the imperialist fire," says President Diaz. "The other fourteen columns were formed at the various points from which each was to make its attack.

"I had a long sheet of canvas, formed of pieces of tent-cloth, hung from a wire, which stretched from tower to tower of the church on the San Juan hill, and which reached to the earth. This was saturated with turpentine, and the leaders of the columns assigned for the real attack were notified that when it was lighted that would be the signal for the charge.

"Most of the enemy's trenches were placed in front of buildings, and were aided by rifle fire, from roofs and balconies, and from loopholes bored through the walls.

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To partly neutralize the deadly fire from such positions, my Legion of Honor, composed only of chiefs and officers who had no place in the ranks, were formed into groups equipped with ladders, and at the moment of the general attack, they were to climb to the tops of the blocks of buildings and throw the enemy's riflemen into confusion.

"As soon as it was dark I prohibited firing from any point of the lines, unless the enemy should attempt a sally.

"This silence, which was soon observed by the enemy, and the circumstance that Marquez [who was marching with 4,000 men from the capital] was within twelve leagues more or less of our rearguard, together with the removal of our baggage in the afternoon, must have made the enemy believe that we were retreating that very night and were then evacuating our lines.

"Having disposed my forces in the manner indicated, I placed myself near the old Alameda, where I could watch the movements of some of the true attacking columns and the three which were to make the false attack.

"My ammunition was so scanty that in the last hour I had to withdraw cartridges from the cavalry and give them to the attacking troops, telling the horsemen that if they were brought into the fight they could use their lances and sabers.

"The mounted force awaiting orders was placed on the south, facing the hills, and thus could serve me even in a retreat."

The false attack on the Convent del Carmen was delivered in the darkness at three o'clock in the morning of April 2d, when Diaz's artillery suddenly opened fire and the three feinting columns swept forward. But it turned out to be a true attack rather than a false one, and the force which was intended merely to deceive the enemy actually captured the position in front of them when reinforced by Diaz's reserves.

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Suddenly the turpentine-soaked canvas strung between the towers of the church on the San Juan hill burst into flame, and at this prearranged signal, the fourteen columns of the true attack charged into the city from different directions.

It seemed as though a blazing whirlwind had struck Puebla as the republican columns charged through the streets, driving the surprised imperialists before them. The beautiful churches of the city long afterwards bore marks of the smashing effect of that battle in the night.

“The sharp firing did not last in all of its vigor more than ten minutes,” says President Diaz. “In a quarter of an hour only the towers of the cathedral and the heights of San Agustin and del Carmen were being defended. The enemy’s forts on the hills, which had not only not suffered attack themselves, but had been reinforced by the fugitives from the city, opened a very lively artillery fire against the city, principally over the streets in which they could see the masses of my soldiers at the beginning of the dawn.

“The assailants of each trench taken had to pass through a canal of fire poured from low windows, loopholes, balconies, and roofs, and to face the fire of the artillery and infantry of the trench which they attacked.

“The vortex of the fight was the Calle de la Siempreviva, which it was the fortune of Commandante Carlos Pacheco to attack. Pacheco fought brilliantly. At the beginning of the assault, the enemy showered on him from the flat roofs not only hand grenades and musket shots, but large bombs, as they had only to light them and let them fall. The fragments of one of these grenades wounded Pacheco in the calf of the leg, but in spite of this, and the fact that he was losing many men, he advanced up to the trenches. Here some of our soldiers threw into the trenches sacks of straw which they carried for the purpose of bridging the openings. Pacheco

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passed over the trenches among the first, but was wounded in the hand. He kept right on up to the corner of the plaza, when a grapeshot fired from the atrium of the cathedral put some of his men out of action and broke his left thigh. One of his soldiers then took him in his arms to bear him to shelter, when another grapeshot broke his right arm and both arms of the soldier who was carrying him.

"Just then other assaulting columns burst into the plaza, that commanded by Colonel Luis Teran, followed by that of Lieutenant-Colonel Enriquez and others in succession."

Just then Diaz rode into the plaza and his victorious soldiers greeted him with wild cheers and red-dripping bayonets. Bugles were blown, flags waved, and salutes fired as the dawning day revealed to the shouting soldiers the erect form and tired face of their leader, who only a year and a half before had climbed down a rope from the roof of his convent prison, just around the corner, and fled in the night with two companions to begin the extraordinary campaign which had ended in the successful storming of Puebla and the salvation of the republic.

The forts of Loreto and Guadalupe still continued to fire, but they were reduced by artillery.

Diaz had not only captured an important part of Maximilian's army, but had seized 6,000 rifles, with abundant ammunition, 60 mounted guns, 130 unmounted guns, a magazine of powder, and a large quantity of clothing and other supplies. He also took about 22 officers and leaders who had been traitors to the republic and had them shot, according to law. The rest of his prisoners were carefully guarded, the officers being locked up by themselves.

In the hour of his triumph the general issued an address to his troops. It is interesting to observe how the



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Latin blood of Diaz—who was ordinarily so reserved, almost shy in his intercourse with other men—flowered into rhetoric at such a time:

*“The General in Chief of the Army Corps of the East to his victorious subordinates in Puebla:*

“Comrades in arms: I desire to be first in paying tribute to your heroism. The whole nation and posterity will henceforth perpetuate your glory. Another memorable date has been written in the city where Zaragoza eternalized his name on the fifth of May. The second of April, 1867, will be registered from to-day in the calendar of the national glories.

“I hoped much of you. I have seen you, without arms, respond to the call of the country, in order to arm yourself in Mihautlán, in La Carbonera, in Jalapa, and in Oaxaca, with rifles taken from the enemy. You have fought naked and hungry, leaving behind you a trail of glory; but, nevertheless, your achievements in Puebla have exceeded my hopes.

“A place not without reason called invincible, and which the first soldiers of the world could not take by assault, yielded to one single push of your strength. The entire garrison and the immense war material accumulated by the enemy are the trophies of your victory.

“Soldiers! you deserve much of the country. The struggle which rends her cannot be prolonged. You have given complete proof of your irresistible valor. Who will dare measure themselves with the victors of Puebla? Independence and republican institutions will waver no more; it is certain that a country which has sons like you cannot be conquered or oppressed.

“Intrepid in battle and sober in victory, you have won the admiration of this city by your courage, and its gratitude by your discipline.

“What general would not be proud to find himself at your head? While you are with me your friend will consider himself invincible.

“PORFIRIO DIAZ.”

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One of the notable things about the capture of Puebla—more remarkable even than the strategic plan, worked out amidst the confusion of one day of supreme peril, which enabled Diaz to storm a fortified city without loss to his army—was the perfect order which characterized the attack and succeeded the victory. Although the republican troops, gathered hurriedly from distant points—many of the soldiers being men of desperate character and lawless habits—had been worked up to a frenzy of indignation by the reports of imperialist atrocities, and by the memory of Maximilian's Black Decree of October 3, 1865, under which republican officers and their soldiers were mercilessly executed as bandits, the discipline which prevailed in Puebla after the battle seemed as perfect as though there had been no fight at all. It was the orderly, temperate spirit of social guardianship inspired by Diaz even in that day of brute triumph, when the streets of beautiful Puebla were in a confusion of trenches, barricades, and marching prisoners of war; a spirit of conservation and sober self-restraint which his statesmanship afterwards extended to every part of his wrecked and demoralized country.

It is in the passions and turmoils of war, when the varnish of conventional life has worn off, that the actual strength or weakness of men reveal themselves most distinctly. With a great city and a helpless enemy at his mercy, Diaz showed himself to be a just and magnanimous man.

The imprisoned officers of Maximilian's army were in a pitiful condition of terror. They looked upon the republicans as a horde of savages who would spare neither life nor property. Believing that they were to be promptly slaughtered, they begged their conqueror to permit them to see their priests and families.

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“I immediately sent for writing materials and sealed paper of every sort,” says President Diaz, “and caused more rooms to be placed at their disposal, so that they, by turns, should be alone with the priests. They employed the time until three o’clock in the afternoon in spiritual confession and in making their wills.”

Diaz assembled all the imprisoned officers before him in the Episcopal Palace and summoned several bishops to the interview. Then he addressed his prisoners in a stern voice. He told them that they deserved death, but as their number was so great, the government of the republic might exercise clemency, especially as the republic was sure to win. He then announced that he would assume the responsibility of setting them free on parole, but insisted that they must promise that if he published a notice in the newspapers saying that his action had been disapproved by the government, they would at once yield themselves prisoners again. To this they all solemnly agreed.

One of the officers thus released was Colonel Vital Escamilla, who had been political chief of the district of Matamoras Izucar, and who, when Diaz escaped from Puebla a year and a half before, offered a prize of his own money for the capture of the fugitive general, dead or alive. Escamilla tried to conceal his identity, but was betrayed to Diaz, who confronted him with the printed circular in which he offered to pay for his capture, and dryly saying that he was glad the Colonel had not lost his money, allowed him to sign his parole and go free.

The general also issued an order throughout his military jurisdiction declaring that “the prisoners taken by the Army of the East in the battles of Mihuatlán and La Carbonera, in the occupation of the city of Oaxaca, in the assault upon this city [Puebla], and in the surrender of the forts of Guadalupe and Loreto, shall be set at

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liberty, to reside in the country wherever they choose, remaining for the present under the surveillance of the local authorities, and at the disposition of the supreme government. Foreigners who wish to live in the country will be subject to the same conditions, and those who wish to leave the country can do so freely."

After liberating the prisoners, Diaz reported his action to President Juarez. The truth is that Juarez, for some reason known only to himself, never made any answer, and failed either to approve or disapprove Diaz's generosity to his prisoners. This was the first evidence that the personal sympathies of Mexico's two greatest leaders were drifting apart.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE MERCIFUL SIEGE OF MEXICO CITY

WITH the tiger-hearted Marquez and his 4,000 men on the road from Mexico, no time was to be lost.

Putting himself at the head of his cavalry, and ordering his infantry and artillery to follow, the victor of Puebla swept out to meet Maximilian's Lieutenant of the Empire.

Twice Diaz met and repulsed Marquez's advance cavalry, driving back his main force at San Lorenzo, and, being joined by General Guadarrama with 4,000 patriot cavalry, he tried to surround the enemy, when Marquez attempted to escape back toward the capital over the bridge of San Cristóbal, which crossed a deep ravine. But Diaz sent on word to friends of the republic to destroy the bridge, and they had partly wrecked the structure when Marquez's army reached it. The imperialists had to throw nearly all of their artillery into the ravine.

Marquez then attempted to make a stand on the other side of the ravine. Diaz hurled his force against the enemy with great energy, whereupon Marquez abandoned his troops and fled for his life to Mexico City, leaving 2,000 of his infantry prisoners in the hands of the republicans.

The rest of the imperialist troops were pursued all day toward Texcoco. It was a running fight of more

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than thirty miles. On the morning of April 12th the exhausted fugitives reached the capital, to find that Marquez, who shamelessly abandoned them at the San Cristóbal bridge, had been there since the day before.

The Mexican empire was now confined practically to two cities. Maximilian, attended by Miramon and Mejia, and supported by 9,000 troops, was shut up in Querétaro by an army of about 20,000 republicans under Generals Escobedo and Corona. Marquez and his force of 8,000 men in the capital were quickly surrounded by Diaz. President Juarez and his government were at San Luis Potosi waiting for the grim end of Napoleon's blundering attempt to monarchize America.

Even now another effort was made to tempt Diaz. Recognizing the power of his leadership, the strength of his armed forces, and his popularity among the hero-worshiping Mexican masses, the enemies of the Constitutional republic in the capital—unaware of Maximilian's vain attempts to seduce or mislead him—planned a last desperate appeal to his ambition, in the hope of saving themselves, and they sent a woman emissary to him while he was moving to Guadalupe, from which village he directed the famous siege of Mexico City.

“During my march from Texcoco to Guadalupe,” says President Diaz, “Señora Donna Luciana Arrazola de Baz came to me from Mexico City. This lady was the wife of Don Juan José de Baz, who was accompanying me at the time. She informed me that General Nicolás Portilla, who then figured as the imperialist Minister of War in the capital, had authorized her to offer to me an entry to the city, to be secured through some concessions to him, to the principal leaders of the imperialist army, and to functionaries of the administration. Nevertheless, the first purpose of the gentleman, I gathered, was to seek a fusion of the two armies,

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under which, united, and recognizing the positions held by the chiefs in each army, they should undertake to establish a new order of things, which should not be either that known as the Empire of Maximilian or the Constitutional government of Señor Juarez.

“Of course I rejected these extravagant propositions, nor would I consider them even in their least unfavorable form, which was that of the conditional surrender of the place; and I answered that I would consent only to unconditional surrender.”

So long as Juarez was the Constitutional representative of Mexican independence; so long as he represented the republic as a whole, and not a mere political faction; so long as he was confronted by invaders and traitors, who had decreed his execution, neither the love of power and glory nor the fear of death could tempt the war-worn Diaz to alter his attitude of sleepless and unquestioning loyalty to the President. A weaker or less scrupulous man might have served his selfish ambitions in such a crisis by finding plausible reasons for repudiating the authority of the unreadable and imperturbable Indian statesman, whose personality was so offensive, and even terrifying, to the Church and the rich and conservative elements generally. But Diaz could see his duty only through the eyes of an incorruptible, obedient soldier; and he served as faithfully as he commanded, spurning all temptations.

If proof were needed that in those rough days his humanity and love of country surpassed his soldierly appetite for military distinction or political popularity, it is to be found in the siege of the City of Mexico. The largeness of the man is seen in the fact that when he might have won the glory of taking the capital by storm, he maintained a weary siege of seventy days rather than

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shed any more blood or subject a population of 200,000 Mexicans to the horrors of a bombardment and assault.

His enemies denounced him as an incompetent or coward. They even hinted that he had some treacherous reason for not attacking the city. They complained bitterly to Juarez and sought to arouse his suspicion. His soldiers began to mutter.

Nothing, however, could move Diaz to unnecessary bloodshed, and after ten years of almost continuous fighting, he sat before the capital for seventy days to save its helpless people from the piteous scenes he had witnessed when he stormed Puebla only a few days before.

Hardly had the general begun his siege on April 13, 1867, by occupying all the land facing west from the ranch of Santa Tomás almost to the rock of Chapultepec, when General Guadarrama and his 4,000 cavalry were compelled to leave him and return to the besieging army of Querétaro. Indeed, before the end of the month General Escobedo asked Diaz to send more troops to him at Querétaro, but while Diaz was preparing to do this, he received a message from General Escobedo saying that he would only require ammunition, and thirty loaded carts were hurried to him with an escort.

It was at this time that Escobedo offered to place himself under the orders of Diaz, who, had he been the ambitious politician his enemies afterwards represented him to be, might have instantly gathered in his hands practically the whole fighting force of the republic and become a military dictator.

As the days went by, Diaz's army increased steadily by the arrival of reinforcements organized under his orders in various states. He also brought up artillery from Puebla and had workshops opened in that city and at Pensacola to supply ammunition. To further complete



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the siege he rapidly equipped canoes with mountain guns and in this way established a line across the lakes, making a floating bridge from San Cristóbal to the "Peñon de los Baños" ("Cliff of the Baths"), thus connecting his lines with a fortified post threatening the city on the east.

Before the capital was completely surrounded, the imperialists dashed out with a heavy force and attempted to cut their way through the besieging lines, but Diaz drove them back into their trenches.

Still another attempt was made to save Maximilian by an appeal to the soldier who had refused so many times to listen to the pleas of the crowned usurper. This time the agent was the scheming abbé who had brought about Maximilian's return to the capital after the Emperor had started to fly from the country. About April 18th, while the investment of Mexico City was being perfected, the Abbé Fischer, Maximilian's personal secretary, went out of the City of Mexico to see Diaz, who received him in the farmhouse of Los Morales. Trembling with emotion, the priest pleaded for the life of his master, who was surrounded by the republican forces at Querétaro.

"He proposed to me," says President Diaz, "that the Emperor should abdicate, with the condition that he was to be permitted to leave the country without responsibility for all the deeds committed during the period of his government."

"You plead for the life of Maximilian," said the general sternly, "but who is there to plead for your life? Under the law I have the right to order your death at once."

"I care nothing for myself," replied the priest. "Take my life, but spare the Emperor."

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Diaz answered the abbé by at once sending him back to the city, saying that he had no power to arrange conditions for Maximilian. He then reported the incident to Juarez.

A few days later the Princess Salm-Salm, the American wife of an Austrian officer in Maximilian's service—a handsome, romantic, spirited woman, whose picturesque and daring attempts to rescue the Emperor have given her name a place in history—also went out of the capital and made similar suggestions to Diaz; but he refused to take serious notice of her proposals, and ordered her to return to the city, sending an escort to take her to the enemy's lines.

While secret appeals were being made to Diaz to assume supreme power, spare the life of Maximilian, and organize a new government, the unspeakable Marquez, within the capital, boasted of imaginary imperialist victories to avert a revolt by the oppressed population.

From the very beginning of the siege, Diaz, intent on preservation rather than destruction, had announced that if the imperialists would make a peaceful surrender of the city his troops would protect life and property. As the days wore on, the representatives of foreign governments in Mexico City, recognizing the merciful moderation of Diaz's attitude, when he might have let loose an overwhelming army upon the capital, urged Marquez to surrender. The blood-guilty Lieutenant of the Empire probably realized that his many crimes against civilization had placed him beyond all hope of pardon, and he refused to consider unconditional submission, but continued his deceitful announcements of the growing strength of the imperialist cause, hoping that by delay he might find a way of escape, at least for himself.

The patient general whose army encircled the city

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was well aware of Marquez's methods of deceiving his soldiers as well as the population regarding the real situation, yet he forbore to make an assault. He had shown that he could fight; he was now showing that he could wait.

When Querétaro was taken and Maximilian and his army were made prisoners on May 15, 1867, General Escobedo telegraphed news of the event to Diaz, who promptly sent the report into the capital. Marquez zealously denied the story of the fall of Querétaro and assured his army that Maximilian had won a victory and was at that moment pushing on with his forces to their rescue.

Prince Khevenhüller, the commander of the Austrian and Hungarian forces in the garrison of Mexico City, becoming convinced that Maximilian really was a prisoner, and that further armed resistance might endanger the Emperor's life, informed Diaz that he would under no circumstances take any further part in any combat if he were allowed to march with his officers and troops and the foreign officials to Vera Cruz, where they would at once embark for Austria.

"I answered the prince," says President Diaz, "that I would grant what he asked if he would pass out through the line of the siege and present himself to me in Tacubaya with his arms, munitions, and horses, except those which were private property, and that, in exchange, I would help him with the money and vehicles necessary to reach Vera Cruz and embark there.

"Khevenhüller explained to me that it was impossible to do what I proposed, but that he would shut himself up with all his forces in the national palace, and at the moment when any fight began he would hoist a white flag and would take no part in it; and he hoped that on account of this I would concede to him just considera-

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tion, since his principal object was not to make the situation of his sovereign difficult."

The Baron de Lago, Chargé d'Affaires of Austria in the capital, also made a visit to Diaz's lines and confirmed Prince Khevenhüller's statement that the Austrian troops in the city believed that with the capture of Maximilian their mission was ended, and that they did not propose to prejudice the fate of their sovereign by taking part in any more fighting. The Baron was accompanied by two lawyers selected by Maximilian to defend him before the military court in Querétaro, Mariano Riva Palacio and Rafael Martinez de la Torre, who were courteously allowed by Diaz to pass through the besieging lines.

Querétaro having been taken, General Escobedo ordered General Corona to go with two divisions of troops to reinforce the besiegers of the capital. Notwithstanding this, and other additions to his forces, and the offer of aid from the Austrians within the city, to say nothing of the condition of the besieged population, who were on the verge of starvation, Diaz still refused to shed any more Mexican blood, but simply narrowed and strengthened his circle of investment.

Those who have found an inexplicable mystery in the rapid change from the old Mexico of devastating wars, political plots, brigandage, lawlessness, commercial insecurity, and chronic bankruptcy, to the Mexico which for a full generation under the strong leadership of President Diaz has grown into a peaceful, prosperous, and respected nation, may find an explanation in the calm strength and immensity of vision with which the hero of so many battles, with the blood of the invaders still fresh on his sword, waited for seventy days before

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the gates of the City of Mexico. In that spectacle of sobriety and self-restraint the future of his country was foreshadowed.

Fresh from scenes of carnage, and while his soldiers yearned to avenge the wrongs of Mexico upon Marquez and his forces, Diaz thought only of peace, order, and the Mexican reconciliation which must precede the restoration of a national consciousness. The regenerative instinct of the statesman conquered the passions of the soldier.

So strong was his constructive spirit that in the midst of the siege, when he discovered that Maximilian had been preparing to dig a new canal for the drainage of the Valley of Mexico, he sent for the Emperor's engineer, who had been in hiding, and demanded to know why the work had been stopped.

This mighty project to save the capital from the devastation of overflowing lakes—in spite of the eight miles of walls built by the Spaniards, 50,000 persons were drowned in the capital by one flood—was first begun in 1607, when the Spanish Viceroy, Don Luis de Velasco, set 15,000 Indians to work on the cut. Again and again the salvation of the city had been vainly attempted. It was President Diaz who finally worked out and completed the drainage works at a cost of almost \$16,000,000.

The engineer declared that he had ceased his work because there were no funds. Even on the battlefield Diaz ordered the man to resume his task, without waiting for the end of the siege, agreeing to supply money for the purpose from his army funds.

It is doubtful whether history can furnish a more remarkable instance of constructive foresight in similar conditions. Such was Grant at Appomattox.

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Another interesting illustration of the general's character is to be found in the fact that during this siege he married his first wife, the Señorita Delfina Ortega y Reyes, daughter of the Oaxacan physician who attended him after he was wounded, twenty years before, in the battle of Ixcapa. This war bride, whose romantic wedding occurred just outside of the besieging lines at Tacubaya, died in the national palace during the first term of President Diaz, and she was the mother of his children.

As soon as the inhabitants of the City of Mexico were convinced that Querétaro had fallen and that Maximilian and his army were prisoners, they became completely demoralized. Within the city Marquez brutally refused to relieve the starving inhabitants by surrendering; outside was Diaz and his closely connected lines, patient, orderly, and sure of success.

Every time Marquez attempted to force a way out, his men were driven back into their trenches; not even a messenger could escape from the inexorable circle of republican steel.

Finally the Lieutenant of the Empire, in sheer desperation, put himself at the head of his troops and attempted by a sudden dash to cut his way through the besieging lines in the direction of La Piedad. The Cuartos bridge had been carried and Colonel Leyva's battalion had been almost annihilated by the imperialists, when Diaz in person led a part of his forces to the rescue, and aided by his artillery drove Marquez and his men back into the city with terrible slaughter.

The terror and misery of the people in the beleaguered city increased. Marquez's forces grew weaker daily, while the republican army steadily grew stronger, until Diaz had 28,000 men massed around the capital.

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Marquez knew that the empire had ceased to exist, and that Maximilian was a prisoner sentenced to death; yet he continued to fly the imperial flag. On June 15th he caused the bells of the churches to be pealed and had fireworks set off, and an official proclamation invited the people to prepare to welcome the Emperor and his army. But the end was very near.

The Mexican traitor, General O'Horan, persuaded Diaz to go out between the lines of the two armies at night to meet him, and sent a lantern with a red lens which was to be used as a signal. The republican leader went forth in the darkness with four boys, drummers and buglers. When the imperialists saw the red light displayed by Diaz, they instantly opened up a tremendous artillery and infantry fire. On the next day O'Horan sent word to Diaz that Marquez himself happened to be in the trench when the signal was displayed and had ordered the volleys which followed. On the next night O'Horan came out of the capital and met Diaz, who has described the interview:

"He offered to surrender the city, including Marquez and the other principal officers, with the sole condition that I should give him a passport to go abroad. I answered that I could do nothing of the kind, for I considered the city already mine, and that as for the other leaders I would fulfill my duty. O'Horan replied that the city would be mine, but that the 'fat chickens'—this was his phrase—might escape me, whereas, by accepting what he proposed, all these would be taken.

"Convinced that I would not accept his propositions, O'Horan said to me, 'Are you very much bent upon having me shot?' 'No, señor,' I answered; 'if you fall into my hands, I will simply fulfill my duty.' 'If you discover where I am hid, will you send to arrest me?' he asked. 'If anyone betrays your whereabouts to me,'

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I said, 'I shall have to have you arrested. I can offer you neither more nor less.' ”

Three or four days before the surrender of the City of Mexico, General Tavera, speaking for Marquez, went out of the capital to see Diaz in an effort to secure conditions for a surrender. He was compelled to go back without results.

Hardly had Tavera returned to the city when Marquez, laying hands on all the gold still left in the treasury, disappeared. It has been said that the cruel and cowardly leader was carried alive in a coffin to the cemetery of the Church of San Fernando and released at midnight, being assisted in his flight in disguise to Vera Cruz by foreign volunteers in the republican army. Diaz, however, has always believed that Marquez did not leave the capital at that time, but was concealed in the residence of a personal friend whose wife had taken pity on him. This was one of the few houses left unsearched when the republican army entered. The fugitive reached Vera Cruz, dressed and equipped as a fruit peddler, was secreted by a kind-hearted merchant—Diaz himself was many years afterwards hidden in the same room by the same merchant—and escaped by ship to Cuba, where “the Tiger of Tacubaya” is still living at the age of ninety years. Even a few months ago, more than forty-two years after his escape, Marquez sent a New Year’s message of congratulation to his white-haired conqueror in Chapultepec Castle.

Another effort to obtain conditions for the surrender of Mexico City was made through the Consul-General of the United States, Marcos Otterbourg. Diaz received Mr. Otterbourg at Chapultepec, but refused to allow him to leave his carriage or to deliver any message.



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“ I gave him warning,” says President Diaz, “ that I was then directing an attack upon the city and that I would allow him five minutes upon his return there. If his vehicle was still on the road after that I would begin to fire on it.

“ Notwithstanding, I waited until the Consul-General’s carriage had disappeared beyond the statue of Carlos IV before I ordered the artillery to open a general fire and our columns to move forward against the city.”

Even then Diaz had no intention of storming a city of 200,000 Mexicans. The frequent appeals from the city had convinced him that the enemy had lost hope, and his order for immediate battle was a mere ruse to force a bloodless surrender. President Diaz explains what followed this feint :

“ When the cannon fire was begun, the enemy in the city could not see our moving columns, but these columns could receive my orders, because my flag-signal system was out of the circle of battle-smoke and dust. I ordered the columns to return to their camps, and the enemy did not observe it. Our cannon fire was answered from the city, but as both the enemy’s artillery and our own used explosive shells, when the imperialists suspended their cannon fire we thought for some moments that they were still replying to us, because our projectiles were exploding in their trenches and it seemed to us as if their guns were still at work.

“ The mounted guard on the height of Chapultepec announced to me that a white flag had been raised on a tower of the Cathedral. I ordered the firing to be suspended and then saw that similar flags had appeared in all the trenches of the place. Just as our cannon ceased, a carriage, also with a white flag, came out of the city by the Reforma Street [this was the wide and beautiful boulevard, lined with statues, which the unfortunate

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Carlota had built between the city and Chapultepec Castle, and called the Road of the Emperor], and it brought to Chapultepec Generals Miguel Peña, Diaz de la Vega, Palafox, and another, whose name I cannot recall, who came to put the place at my disposal by the authority of Tavera, as they had had no news of Marquez since the day before."

Thus, without bloodshed, ended the final attempt of European monarchy to upset republican government in America. It was June 20, 1867, the day after the solemn execution of Maximilian, Miramon, and Mejia at Querétaro.

Diaz made no preparations to revenge his country upon the armed traitors or invaders. Instead of that, he arranged to occupy Mexico City on the following day, and he ordered the army bakers, and all the assistants who could be procured, to work all night, baking bread for the starving garrison and population of the city. To prevent pillage, he ordered the enemy's military guards and policemen to remain at their posts until they were relieved by him, and he organized a complete police service from his three Oaxaca battalions, to cover the whole city, marking the patrols on a map, so that not a single house should be out of sight. While the imperialists in the capital trembled at the thought of what might happen to them in the morning, when the victorious republican army should enter, the conquering general spent most of the night working out his plan of mercy and guardianship.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### EXECUTION OF MAXIMILIAN

MUCH brilliant and emotional nonsense has been written about the death of Maximilian. Although there was a fine swing of sentiment in the last utterances of the princely adventurer, and the circumstances attending his execution appeal strongly to the imagination, it was the poetic and dramatic, not the moral, strain in him that inspired so many attempts to represent him as a hero or martyr.

For two months the capricious Emperor of Mexico withstood the siege of Querétaro. During that time the inhabitants of the city were robbed, beaten, imprisoned, and murdered. Every male inhabitant of Querétaro between the ages of sixteen and sixty years was forced to serve in his garrison. Shops and residences were openly plundered and the people shamelessly stripped of their possessions, in order that the soldiers might be comfortable.

Toward the middle of May his two principal generals, Miramon and Mejia, had planned a sally in force out of the city, in the hope of saving their master. Day after day this plan was postponed because Maximilian was busy distributing decorations and needed time to make up his mind as to the honors to be conferred on his favorites. His aid-de-camp, Prince Salm-Salm, has given a word picture of the fair-bearded, blue-eyed, tall

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young Austrian usurper immersed in the study of court honors while the helpless population around him was crying for bread and suffering from the horrors of military pillage.

Now and then he would go to a public garden in the rear of the cathedral and sit in the sunlight on the edge of an old fountain, idle, dreamy, voluptuous, irresolute, even while General Escobedo's army was bombarding the city and the patient Diaz was encamped inexorably about the capital.

On the night of May 14th Maximilian secretly sent Colonel Miguel Lopez to see General Escobedo. He asked the republican commander to permit him to pass out of Querétaro with fifty horsemen, in order that he might reach the coast and leave Mexico, promising never to return. He was careful, however, to conceal from his generals his intention to abandon them and save his own life. That the Emperor was willing to desert his faithful followers, and that he fully understood the treachery of his conduct, is proved by the note which he wrote to Colonel Lopez :

“MY DEAR COLONEL LOPEZ: We charge you to observe the profoundest secrecy in respect to the commission we gave you for General Escobedo, because if it is divulged our honor will be sullied.

“Affectionately yours,

“MAXIMILIAN.”

The perfidy of the Emperor may be appreciated when it is understood that on the very day he sent Colonel Lopez to bargain for his escape, he actually held a council of war, at which it was decided that the whole garrison of Querétaro should attempt to break the siege on the following day.

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It has been charged that Colonel Lopez accepted a money bribe of \$30,000 to surrender the city. This charge was denied many years afterwards by General Escobedo. President Diaz says that Escobedo privately informed him, a few days after the fall of Querétaro, that Lopez made an earnest attempt to secure Maximilian's life, and that it was only after he learned that further pleading was useless that he asked for his own life, agreeing to assist the republican army in taking Querétaro.

Before daybreak on May 15, 1867. Escobedo attacked the city. Colonel Lopez, who commanded a part of the imperialist line of defense, allowed the republican troops to pour into Querétaro through the cemetery of the Convent de la Cruz. Maximilian was asleep in that convent. Aroused by the sound of fighting, he dressed himself and rushed out, prepared to fly, only to find the place in the possession of the republican soldiery. Almost immediately Miramon and Mejia were at his side. The Emperor was dressed in a blue tunic, gold-striped blue breeches, and high, old-fashioned cavalry boots. His face was white. He seemed ill, yet, even then, he asked Mejia whether it would be possible to cut a way through the republicans.

The Indian general shook his head. The end had come. Prince Salm-Salm says that when his master's way was barred by soldiers, he raised one of the Emperor's revolvers, and that Maximilian forbade him with a gesture.

General Corona appeared through the masses of patriot infantry. Maximilian, who had tied a handkerchief to his riding whip as a sign of truce, drew his sword, and offered it to the republican general, grandly announcing himself as the Emperor of Mexico; but

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Corona sternly informed him that he was no emperor, but a Mexican and a prisoner.

With death now staring him in the face, Maximilian sought to evade punishment for his crimes against the people of Mexico by sheer cunning. When informed that he must stand trial for his life, he coolly declared that he was not the Emperor of Mexico, but having abdicated the crown two months before, he was merely an Austrian archduke temporarily in Mexico. This, notwithstanding the fact that two days before his capture he was still issuing imperial Mexican decorations. He haughtily demanded that as an archduke of the Austrian empire he should receive safe conduct to the seacoast and be permitted to return to his own country.

It is true that Maximilian had actually signed a deed of abdication, but had hidden it away, and the document itself showed that he had appointed regents to perpetuate his empire in case of his death.

Although under a Mexican law passed in 1862 the prisoner might have been shot within twenty-four hours, President Juarez ordered that he, with Miramon and Mejia, should be publicly tried before a court-martial.

Maximilian was charged with invading the country without right or claim; calling in foreigners to assist him in his unjust warfare; overthrowing the Constitution and institutions of the country; destroying the lives and property of Mexicans; barbarously decreeing the murder of Mexicans who defended their country; authorizing the destruction of Mexican villages and cities by his soldiers; encouraging foreign troops to kill thousands of Mexican citizens; and, when deprived of the support of foreign troops, employing Mexican traitors to continue him in his usurpation of power up to the very time when he had been overcome by force.

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With a courage worthy of a better cause the beautiful Princess Salm-Salm attempted several times to save Maximilian's life. She gained admission to the convent in which he was imprisoned, and while attending him, with her husband, planned his escape. Prince Salm-Salm declares in his published diary that the prisoner in arranging for his flight intended to go to Vera Cruz. "In that city," he says, "the Emperor expected to find more than a million dollars in the treasury, and as the Mexicans had no fleet to prevent it he could procure provisions from Havana and troops from the state of Yucatan, which was in favor of the Emperor. Thus we might be able to hold out for at least a year, while Miramon and Mejia were busy in the country."

The princess attempted to bribe the Mexican colonel who had charge of the prisoners, offering to him two drafts on the Austrian imperial family for \$100,000 each, the drafts being signed by Maximilian. The drafts were accompanied by Maximilian's signet ring. The prisoner had bribed the guards in the convent. On another occasion, when all was ready for Maximilian's flight, when horses were ready and an escort secretly provided, Maximilian had not only declined to cut off his flowing fair beard, of which he was very proud, but at the last moment he languidly informed his would-be rescuers that he had decided not to escape that night. The colonel to whom the princess had offered a \$200,000 bribe revealed the plot to General Escobedo, and that officer, curtly remarking that the air of Querétaro did not seem to agree with her, banished her from the place.

Maximilian was permitted to select lawyers to defend him, but when the time for trial approached he declined to appear before his judges, pleading illness. He refused to recognize the authority of the court and

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had the audacity to write a note asking the judges to declare themselves incompetent to try him. All subterfuges, however, were in vain, and after a full and fair hearing, Maximilian, Miramon, and Mejia were found guilty and sentenced to death on June 14, 1867

Extraordinary efforts were made to save Maximilian from his fate. The Queen of Great Britain and Napoleon III appealed to President Juarez through the government of the United States. The Emperor of Austria also asked for the life of his captive brother, offering to restore him to all his rights in Austria and guaranteeing that he would never return to Mexico. Victor Hugo wrote a moving letter to Juarez. The President of the United States joined in the appeal, but not vigorously.

The President whom Maximilian had ordered to be slain when captured, postponed the day of execution, but he declined to interfere with the course of justice. Through his minister, Lerdo de Tejada, he declared that the prisoner's character was so untrustworthy that he could not be depended upon to abstain from another attempt on the Mexican nation. The sovereigns of Europe could give no reliable guarantee that Maximilian would not undertake a fresh invasion of the country. The existence of Mexico as an independent nation could not be left to the will of the governments of Europe. For fifty years Mexico had followed a policy of compromise and pardon. The result had been repeated wars and anarchy. The pardon of Maximilian would not only cause confusion and political uncertainty in Mexico, but would encourage Europe, which was not willing to see in Mexicans men worthy to form a nation and looked upon republican institutions as the dream of demagogues, to send new armies across the sea under the pretext of civilizing the country



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The day of execution was finally set for June 19th. On the night before the tragedy the Princess Salm-Salm, who was an American and would not give up the fight, made a last appeal to President Juarez in San Luis Potosi. In her interesting book she describes her interview with the great-hearted Indian whose death Maximilian had so heartlessly decreed :

“ It was eight o'clock in the evening when I went to see Mr. Juarez, who received me at once. He looked pale and suffering himself. With trembling lips I pleaded for the life of the Emperor, or at least for delay. The President said that he could not grant it ; he would not prolong his agony any longer ; the Emperor must die to-morrow.

“ When I heard these cruel words I became frantic with grief. Trembling in every limb and sobbing, I fell down on my knees and pleaded with words which came from my heart, but which I cannot remember. Mr. Juarez tried to raise me, but I held his knees convulsively and said I would not leave him before he had granted his life. I saw the President was moved ; he, as well as Mr. Iglesias [the Minister of Justice], had tears in their eyes, but he answered me with a low and sad voice : ‘ I am grieved, madam, to see you thus on your knees before me ; but if all the kings and queens of Europe were in your place I could not spare his life. It is not I who take it, it is the people and the law, and if I should not do its will the people would take it and mine also.’ ”

On that same night Maximilian sat in his little convent cell and wrote a short note to the President :

“ QUERÉTARO, June 19, 1867.

“ SEÑOR DON BENITO JUAREZ: Being about to die, in consequence of having attempted to discover whether new political institutions would put an end to the bloody

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civil war waged for so many years in this unhappy land, I gladly yield my life if the sacrifice will bring peace and prosperity to my adopted country. Profoundly convinced that nothing durable can be built upon a soil soaked with blood and rent by violent commotions, I implore you in the most solemn manner, and with the earnestness appropriate to my position, that my blood shall be the last to be shed, and that with a perseverance such as that with which you have upheld your cause (and which I gladly recognized and esteemed in my prosperity), you will consecrate yourself to the noble task of reconciliation and of founding a permanent peace and tranquillity in this unhappy country.

“MAXIMILIAN.”

He had previously written the following touching note to his insane wife Carlota:

“MY BELOVED CARLOTA: If some day you are permitted by God to be restored, you will hear of the increasing misfortune which has followed me since you departed for Europe. You carried my soul away with you. My hopes have been shattered by so many unexpected strokes that death is a joyous release rather than an agony. I go down gloriously as a soldier and as a king, defeated but not dishonored. If your suffering be such that God may summon you to be with me, I will bless the divine hand which has been laid so heavily upon us. Farewell. Farewell.

“Your unhappy MAXIMILIAN.”

Shortly after daybreak on the morning of June 19, 1867, Maximilian, with Miramon and Mejia, were driven in a carriage to the Hill of the Bells, on the outskirts of the city, where 4,000 soldiers of the republic were drawn up to see them die. It is said that on the journey Mejia attempted to soothe his master's last hours by telling

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him that Carlota was dead. All through the dread spectacle this brave but misguided Mexican general, who has been described by Prince Salm-Salm as "a little ugly Indian, remarkably yellow, of about forty-five, with an enormous mouth, and over it a few bristles representing a mustache," bore himself with silent dignity. Many days before, General Escobedo had offered him a chance to escape, but he declined to go unless Maximilian could go with him. President Juarez had privately offered to pardon him, but he refused to accept a pardon.

The three men were taken up the slope to a low adobe wall and were stood side by side. They embraced each other and looked up at the sky. A priest stood near them. Maximilian, who was set between his companions, surrendered the place of honor to Miramon, who loudly declared that he had never been a traitor, asked that that stain should not be attached to his name or his children's, and cried, "Long live the Emperor!"

Maximilian then addressed the troops and the immense silent multitude assembled beyond them. In a ringing voice, and with a more princely dignity than he had ever shown before in his career, he declared that he died for the cause of Mexican independence and liberty. He had been destined to be either a benefactor or a martyr. He hoped that his blood might be the last to be shed for the good of his adopted country. He then advanced and gave a few gold pieces to each soldier in the firing squad. At his earnest request his eyes were left unbandaged. Looking straight into the faces of his executioners, he asked them not to aim at his face, so that his mother might be able to recognize his body, and then placing his hands upon his bosom and drawing himself to his full height, he waited for the volley which ended the scene.

## EXECUTION OF MAXIMILIAN

It has been said many times and is generally believed that if Maximilian had been in the hands of General Diaz he would not have been executed. The writer of these lines mentioned this idea to President Diaz only a few months ago. The President looked very grave and cast his glance downward for a moment, obviously moved by the suggestion. Then, looking his questioner straight in the eyes, he said :

“ I think I should have consented to his death at that time—not as a matter of vengeance, but as a national necessity, as a means of extinguishing the revolutionary spirit in the country. Indeed, I feel quite sure that there would have been no change in the result had the fate of Maximilian been in my hands. The life of a nation is more important than the life of any individual. Yet ” —and his great eyes sparkled as he clasped his hands behind him and straightened his broad shoulders—“ I am glad that the responsibility for his execution was not mine.”

Before the death of Juarez’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lerdo de Tejada, he expressed to a friend his satisfaction that the Empress Carlota was not in Mexico when the end of the empire came.

“ We would have been compelled to execute her also,” he said.

## CHAPTER XXV

### BRINGING ORDER OUT OF CHAOS

THE thoughtful mood in which Diaz entered the surrendered City of Mexico with his army of 30,000 men on the morning of June 21, 1867, was indicated by the procession of huge wagons piled high with fresh-baked bread for the famished people, which followed the glittering columns of the triumphant republic.

As he rode into the state capital of his country in a pageant of shining steel, the victor's face had a care-worn, almost sad, expression. The responsibilities of peace seemed to weigh upon him more heavily than the excitements and perils of war. This was one of the crowning days of his soldierly career, a day to be remembered forever in Mexican history, yet he forbade the rejoicing multitudes to cheer him or his army, so that there should be nothing to arouse party passion and disturb the perfect peace and order of his entry.

Instead of ransacking the city for victims, he saw to it that life and property were protected, that the sick were cared for, and that food was first distributed to women, children, and the aged. He had ordered that no pulque (the common native intoxicant) should be brought into the capital for three days, and no drunken men were to be seen. Not only were the streets policed with extreme care, but the military lines of investment were maintained

## BRINGING ORDER OUT OF CHAOS

by pickets, and no one was allowed to enter or leave the city without written permission.

In order to put an instant stop to lawlessness, the general announced that robbery or crimes of violence would be punished by death. This order made no distinction between friends or foes, soldiers or civilians.

The only prisoners who presented themselves voluntarily after Diaz occupied the city were General Tavera and a few officers and men. Diaz then issued a proclamation summoning all officers of the imperialist army, as well as ministers, councilors, and department chiefs in the imperial administration, to surrender themselves at certain temporary prisons assigned to them according to their rank, giving them twenty-four hours in which to submit. Only a few obeyed the order, whereupon detachments searched the city. Among those arrested was General Vidaurri, the republican general, who in a critical moment of the war, and while he was the republican governor of San Luis Potosi, turned traitor, went over to the imperialists and attacked Monterey, where President Juarez and his government had taken refuge.

“On his arrest being reported to me,” says President Diaz, “I gave orders that Vidaurri should be deprived of his arms and shot immediately, allowing the delay necessary for the identification of his person. I did this, not only because he had incurred the penalty named in my proclamation but also because he had helped to prolong the war by assisting the imperialists. I also intended that his death should be an example to those who had failed to obey my orders.”

This was the only imperialist blood shed by Diaz. Marquez had escaped, and O’Horan—who had vainly tried to save himself in advance by agreeing to betray Marquez and his garrison into Diaz’s hands—was still

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in hiding; but O'Horan was discovered and shot after Juarez and his government returned to Mexico City.

A few days later Diaz disarmed Prince Khevenhüller and his Austrian troops, assisted him to Vera Cruz, and permitted him to sail home. Captain Schenet and his 200 French guerrillas were also disarmed and allowed to embark on the same vessel with Prince Khevenhüller.

Superficial and careless students of the Mexico of to-day frequently express surprise that the republic could have risen to such a height of financial prosperity and material development under the long-extended presidency of a fighting soldier who was first installed in power by his victorious soldiers. They forget his youthful education in the law; they overlook the administrative originality and resourcefulness he showed at the age of twenty-five years when acting as subprefect in the lonely mountain village of Ixtlan; the extraordinary executive capacity which enabled him to secure revenue and maintain the government of Tehuantepec when he was cut off from all outside assistance or advice, and the rare qualities he displayed after his escape from prison walls in Puebla in raising, equipping, and maintaining his new army, and governing the many great states intrusted to his care.

Seeing deeply into the grievances of his people, and recognizing the bitter hardships which more than half a century of armed strife had brought into their daily lives, he had never allowed the expenses of the war to fall on the much-abused general population. Other generals knew how to fight, but they did not maintain their troops well, and imposed cruel sacrifices on the small towns and villages, frequently causing the victims to go over to the imperialists, who did not have to live on the country.

While besieging the City of Mexico, Diaz managed to

## BRINGING ORDER OUT OF CHAOS

pay his soldiers punctually and also to meet the public expenses of the vast domain in his jurisdiction. Not only that, but in spite of all difficulties he actually accumulated a handsome surplus. These moneys were not the result of random spoliation, but were raised by ordinary state taxation, by the orderly collection of fines, and by the lawful forfeiture of property owned by Mexican citizens who had supported Maximilian.

So great was Diaz's reputation as a businesslike administrator, and so well known were his prompt and fair-dealing methods, that when he entered the capital, he was able immediately to raise a loan of \$50,000 on his own personal credit through José de Teresa. A group of foreign merchants, principally citizens of the United States, voluntarily advanced \$200,000 to him through the American Consul-General. These loans were wholly paid back within a month, and even before the return of Juarez to the capital.

Notwithstanding the passion and disorder of the time, Diaz had kept an exact and detailed account of the revenues of his administration, including all the moneys captured by his troops, from the time when his army fund was started with the \$3,000 seized in Tulcingo by a patriotic bandit in his following. When Juarez appeared in the City of Mexico, the general transferred to the Finance Minister his army strong-box containing \$87,232.19, in addition to which he delivered more than \$200,000 from his various finance officers. His total economies were represented by the sum of \$315,000.

This demonstration of administrative faithfulness and foresight was made more striking by the fact that Diaz turned over to the general government a well-fed, well-armed, and well-clothed army, fully paid up to the very moment of Juarez's arrival. Thus less than thirteen



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years after the poor young law student of Oaxaca had publicly defied the tyrant Santa Anna, he was able to greet the returning President of the republic without a dollar of debt resting upon his army or his administration, and with hundreds of thousands of dollars in his treasury, every item of income or expenditure being accounted for exactly.

Not only that, but he had saved the name of his country in the eyes of the world at a time when the misunderstood execution of Maximilian had sent a thrill of horror throughout Europe, and the humane but inflexible Juarez was being denounced as a bloodthirsty savage.

“In a private letter from San Luis Potosi,” says President Diaz, “the President had ordered me to imprison M. Dano, the French Minister to Maximilian, and to turn over to our government the archives of the French Legation. I answered to the President that this proceeding did not seem to be prudent, but that I did not presume to advise him that it should not be done. I simply begged him to excuse me from executing the order, and declared to him that since there was no longer an enemy in the country, I should not feel it to be inconvenient to turn over the command of my army to some chief to be indicated by him, in order that he should carry out his commands.

“Not receiving an answer to my letter, nor a suggestion that I should resign my command, I wrote to the President several other letters, begging him to give me his orders, so that the opportunity to have them carried out should not be lost, for the French Minister was urging me much to give him an escort to Vera Cruz.

“When I received Señor Juarez in front of Tlalnepantla [near the capital] I asked Señor Lerdo [Secretary of State] why my letters had not been answered, and he replied that, in his opinion, I had been right in not lending myself to the fulfillment of that order, which would

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have compromised the government. Then I considered the incident closed."

On the very day he entered the City of Mexico with his troops, Diaz had sent to Juarez his resignation as General in Chief of the Army of the East. The President had taken no notice of it.

There can be little doubt that the great Zapotec, who had maintained the cause of the republic in its hours of darkness with such noble dignity, courage, and eloquence, had become, if not actually jealous, at least resentful, of the widespread popularity of his loyal general. After all, Juarez was human, and it is known that Ignacio Mejia, his Minister of War, who was envious of Diaz's rise to the rank of a national hero, constantly sought to influence the mind of the President against his once pupil and always unbribable friend and supporter.

One has but to remember how often, and with what manly indignation, Diaz resisted all attempts to persuade him to abandon or disown the fugitive and helpless Juarez, to realize his feelings when, in the hour of his success, and after he had offered to lay down his command, the President stubbornly ignored his urgent and important official letters.

This coldness which fell between the two great Mexicans, so alike in their objects and so different in their methods and capacities—the one energetic, practical, and open, the other theoretic, legal, and reserved—was the then unrecognized starting point of a new division in Mexican politics, the genesis of events that ultimately changed Mexican history.

Juarez returned to the capital bankrupt and with unpaid ministers, secretaries, and soldiers. In order to receive him, Diaz went beyond Tlalnepantla, and in that

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village the President confessed that for many days the soldiers of his escort, a regiment, two battalions, and half of a battery, had been without pay. The members of his Cabinet had not received their salaries. The general at once supplied the money necessary to meet the emergency.

In spite of Juarez's strange apathy toward him, Diaz made elaborate preparations for the President's entry into the city. Among other things, he had a magnificent Mexican banner made at a cost of \$240. When Juarez, moving through the ranks of Diaz's troops, while the streets rang with the shouts of the people and the sound of music, reached the ceremonial platform erected in front of the national palace, Diaz presented the banner, saying:

"It may surprise you to notice that the national colors are not flying over the national palace. Remembering my promise to you when the invaders of our soil compelled the government of the republic to lower its flag and retire from the capital, that you would yet raise that flag again on the palace, I have forbidden any display of our beloved colors on that building till they are lifted to their place once more by your own hands."

Not many days after this Diaz had a long talk with the President, in which he informed him that he intended to withdraw from the army and devote himself to commerce. Juarez begged him not to abandon the military service, insisting that it would be difficult to take up another career.

Juarez then dismissed more than two thirds of the army, without making the slightest effort to provide employment or pensions for the multitude of officers and men thus suddenly thrown upon their own resources. He turned an unfriendly face upon Diaz's old followers and friends, and began to remove them from office,

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What was left of the army was divided into several divisions of 4,000 men each. Diaz, who had been the principal general of the republic, was assigned to one of these divisions, and without a word of protest, he marched with it to take up his headquarters at Tehuacan.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### DIAZ ABANDONS JUAREZ AND TURNS FARMER

So long as the war lasted, and so long as Mexican independence was challenged, the profound moral courage, deep eloquence, and patriotic fidelity of Juarez made him safe from the criticism or opposition of his loyal countrymen. With the return of peace his weakness as a ruler of men began to show itself. The great Indian had a legislative, rather than a governing, mind. With the overthrow of ecclesiastical tyranny his real mission came to an end.

Rapt in the contemplation of fundamental theories of government which he had been compelled to defend through so many years of adversity, danger, and misrepresentation, he had not sufficient flexibility of mind to recognize that the immediate problem of Mexico was one of strength and skill and not one of principles.

It is a sound concept of government that law must wait upon order. Mexico was socially and politically disorganized, bankrupt, lawless. All the highways were commanded by bandits, who invaded great cities and plundered even in the streets of the capital. The republican form of government had been saved, but life and property were everywhere insecure. Foreign capital had withdrawn from the country and commerce was paralyzed.

While still in command at Mexico City, Diaz, ignoring the ordinary law, and availing himself of his special

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powers, had instantly put an end to pillage by decreeing death to anyone who should steal anything of the value even of twenty-five cents. His clear, practical mind dealt with the realities of life. He saw that the Mexican people were on trial before the civilized world, and that a new order of things must be established by intelligent force before the nation could be reconciled and consolidated. A natural governor and administrator, his mind was fixed on government itself more than on theories of government, and he thought of the objects of democracy rather than particular methods of democracy.

In this spirit he went to Juarez, and pointed out the frightful effects of widespread brigandage, not only upon the lives and fortunes of the Mexican people, but also upon the national reputation and credit throughout the civilized world. He urged the President to meet the emergency by obtaining a special emergent law authorizing the summary execution of bandits and kidnapers. The salvation of the country from anarchy would depend on stern, swift action. The world must know that the republic of Mexico was at least able to maintain public order. The investors of other countries must be convinced that the nation would protect life and property.

The lawyerlike mind of Juarez shrank from the blunt soldier's plan for dealing sudden and terrible justice to bandits. Still intent upon the exact forms of law, although the law was powerless, he answered that, under the Constitution, highway robbers were entitled to trial in the ordinary courts. They were citizens of the republic and could not be deprived of their legal rights.

Among the statesmen of all countries are to be found great political idealists, like Juarez, who see society only through their individual temperaments. Looking inwardly upon the well-ordered domain of their own moral

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natures, their unpremeditated tendency is to minimize or overlook the immense and sometimes irreconcilable differences in the social and political units upon which government must act. Others, like Diaz, look out upon the actual facts of life, see the selfishness, the shallowness, the inequality, the natural antagonisms, the moral dullness, the social incompatibility, and the absence of any clear civic consciousness existing among the undeveloped masses of the people, and recognize that, while the objects of sound society are just and equal protection and opportunity for all, the compelling force of government must be exerted through some and upon others. To minds like his, peace and order form the indispensable threshold to all else. There can be no collective sense of duty where there is no individual sense of duty. The ignorance and incapacity of a citizen, Mexican or otherwise, cannot be converted into knowledge and ability by the simple process of multiplying them several million times.

Both Juarez and Diaz were necessary to the wonderful evolution of modern Mexico, and the relative value and significance of their services to the nation must be determined by an honest consideration of the nature of the conditions in which the leadership of each became permanent. The form of the government having been settled, and the right of Mexicans to conduct their affairs in their own way and for their own exclusive benefit being now unchallenged, the new problem was how to secure internal peace and begin the material development of a people so long abandoned to politics and war.

No one venerated the noble qualities of Juarez more sincerely than Diaz, yet his practical mind saw that as yet the Constitution in all its parts was not so much the deliberate expression of the will of the enfranchised Mex-

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ican people, but a party banner, which had become sacred because of the blood sacrificed in its name.

Disheartened by the refusal of Juarez to deal resolutely with an armed lawlessness so open and so general as to amount to warfare, Diaz retired to his military duties at Tehuacan and watched the development of events.

Meantime the President, who had already wounded Diaz's feelings by coldly ignoring his urgent official communications, continued to remove the general's friends from office and to neglect his old comrades in arms, who had been suddenly turned out of the military service after years of fighting in the field, which had unfitted them to take up at once the ordinary employments of private life in a disorganized and devastated country.

Returning to Mexico City, Diaz told the President how deeply he was pained by the removal of his friends from their positions, not only because his deserving companions in war were brought to personal distress, but because the authority of the government was as yet so little established that its policy might result in armed insurrections, and he did not feel that he could help to put them down if he had to fight his friends of yesterday. He particularly complained of the removal of General Juan N. Mendez, the brave and capable officer whom he had appointed to be governor of the state of Puebla.

Juarez listened imperturbably to the advice and protest of his general, but declined to alter his course in any way. That incident served to increase the personal estrangement which in time completely separated the two men.

Scarcely had Juarez been a month in the capital when he ordered an election for the choice of a new President and a new Congress. This was to take the place of the



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national election postponed when the President and his government had taken refuge in Paso del Norte during the war of intervention. At the same time he ordered a popular plebiscite to determine whether the President should have the power of a suspensive veto on all acts of Congress—the veto to be overcome only by a two-thirds majority—and also to decide whether priests and other ecclesiastics, politically disfranchised and excluded from office by the Laws of Reform, should again have the right of serving as deputies in the Congress.

The purpose of Juarez in proposing the political rehabilitation of ecclesiastics was a magnanimous attempt to promote a reconciliation in Mexican society. He who had shattered the power of the Church and had stripped it of its wealth and privileges, now proposed to restore to its priesthood the right of election to office as a sign of peace.

In spite of all his experience, Juarez fatally misjudged the time. He was reëlected President, but his plan to confer the rights of citizenship on the clergy was defeated as a reactionary measure. Diaz's friends proposed him as a candidate against Juarez, and his name was used in spite of his own vigorous protest. The ill-timed effort of Juarez to restore the citizenship of the clergy, who only a few weeks before had been supporting Maximilian in his attempt to extinguish the Mexican republic, revived old passions, and the political leaders separated into groups, which presently became political parties.

The President soon realized that he had blundered seriously by introducing such an inflammable political question into national affairs before the fierce emotions aroused through years of war had time to cool off.

The newly elected Chamber of Deputies was dominated by the fighting patriots of yesterday, with the

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heat of battle still in their blood. The President, who had been in full control until the Congress met, now found himself stoutly antagonized by an organized legislative opposition, led by the famous orator, Manuel Maria Zamacono.

Before the suspension of payments on the Mexican foreign debt had furnished Napoleon III with his pretext for invasion, Juarez had had a painful experience with a talking, contentious Congress. His troubles now were not confined to oratorical attacks. The President had not only embittered a multitude of the bravest and worthiest officers in the army by suddenly turning them out of their uniforms into the helplessness of private life, and by harshly depriving their friends of office all over the country, but he had also discharged the great bulk of the military force necessary to maintain tranquillity in a vast country accustomed to insurrection as a means of redress for grievances, and swarming with armed bandits—relying for peace largely on the intrinsic virtue of democratic institutions in a population to which self-government was merely a vague sentiment. The laws could not execute themselves, and, although the Constitution was democratic, the Mexican people had not yet acquired the moral unity, self-restraint, and individual sense of responsibility of a democracy.

Here and there groups flew to arms without political programmes. In the spring of 1868 there was a rebellion in Yucatan, which was suppressed. The partisans of General Huerta attempted another revolution in Michoacan. There was an insurrection at Sinaloa, headed by General Angel Martinez and Colonel Adolfo Palacio. Guerrillas, under General Negrete, revolted in Monte de las Cruces. Still another rebellion was started in the mountains of Zacapoaxtla, in the state of Puebla. All

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these sparks of revolution were more or less extinguished by Juarez, but a rebellion in Tamaulipas proved to be more serious.

From his post at Tehuacan, Diaz viewed these familiar signs of approaching civil war with anxiety. He had privately attempted to make Juarez see the inevitable consequences of his policy but had failed. As he wore the sword of the republic he could not countenance any act of hostility to the government, nor could he bear to think of turning that sword against the old friends who had served in arms with him so long, and who now were in open revolt against the policy which he himself believed must, if persisted in, wreck the republic and discredit it in the eyes of the civilized world.

He had intended to leave the army and take up a commercial life, and Juarez had talked him out of his purpose. Now, like a true soldier, being convinced that the course of the party in power meant ruin for the country, he once more asked permission to retire from the army without pay, in order that he should not be under any obligations to the government. The President again tried to dissuade him, but in May, 1868, granted his discharge with full pay. This money Diaz afterwards gave to the rebuilding of a bridge for his native city.

In resigning his sword, the general made it plain to Juarez that he was personally and politically out of sympathy with the government. So careful was he to avoid all obligations that might embarrass his future action in Mexico, at a time when his name was being shouted from one end of the country to the other as the only leader strong enough to prevent the nation from committing moral and political suicide, that he declined even a nominal connection with the army, so that in the unfortunate event of civil war, he might not have, directly or in-



DIAZ WHEN HE WAS A FARMER, A YEAR BEFORE HE BECAME  
PRESIDENT FOR THE FIRST TIME.



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directly, access to or control of government arms or ammunition. His determination not to add to the general confusion, and to give Juarez and his advisers a fair chance to restore order and put the nation on the road to prosperity, is shown by the fact that for three years and a half, in the teeth of passionate appeals from his friends, he refused to draw his sword again.

Retiring to his native city, Diaz was received in Oaxaca as a national hero, and the state, more appreciative than the nation, presented to him a house and farm known as La Noria. Here, on the outskirts of the city, he settled down to the quiet life of a farmer, wearing a huge sombrero and coarse blue cotton garments, and working in his fields like any other man.

Nothing could have been more manly or modest than the life of the general at this time. Having washed his mind of war and politics, he laboriously earned his living with his own hands. Week after week, month after month, year after year, he strode among his sugar cane, a figure of impressive simplicity. The soldier who had won distinction with the instruments of death was now concerned only with the tools of life. He who had spurned the appeals of an emperor was contented with a career of manual toil.

Yet as he walked about the ancient streets of gray Oaxaca, with their poverty-stricken Indians, rumbling ox carts, and stately churches, or sat in his farmhouse through the long evenings, with his wife and new-born children, there came to him news of weakness and war throughout his country. Nowhere was there a sign of leadership strong enough or wise enough to turn Mexico from dissensions and war into ways of peace and usefulness.

In the year 1869 there were new rebellions against

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the government, apparently without any definite political plan. There was a local revolt in San Luis Potosi, which was suppressed. In the citadel of Merida, Yucatan, there was another conspiracy, which the military commandant quelled, shooting some of the conspirators. On February 3, 1869, General Negrete, who had been in hiding, again declared himself against Juarez, heading the garrison of Puebla in a revolt. General Alejandro Garcia pursued him and routed his forces at San Martin Atexcal. On February 27th General Diego Alvarez announced that he had suppressed a local rebellion in the state of Guerrero. The revolt in Tamaulipas was brought to an end, but a revolution, begun in San Luis Potosi in the closing days of 1869, received new life in 1870, under the leadership of General Francisco Aguirre. Generals Larrañaga and Pedro Martinez were sent by Juarez with troops to crush this revolution, but, instead, they joined the revolutionists. In this dilemma Juarez sent General Rocha, who was successful in San Luis Potosi, but was beaten later on by revolutionists at Puerto de San José.

Here, there, everywhere, the people rose in arms. The cry of discontent with the government spread rapidly. The cementing force of democratic principles, upon which Juarez depended, failed to satisfy a people out of employment, oppressed and unsettled by lawless conditions, and unable to see any promise of betterment in the policy of the government.

With something like 6,000 revolutionists from San Luis Potosi, General Garcia de la Cadena marched against Guadalajara, passed through its outskirts, and moved southward. A government force under General Rocha defeated the 6,000 insurgents at Lo de Ovejo. Then Generals Garcia de la Cadena and Pedro Martinez moved to the state of Zacatecas with about 2,800 men, and de-

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feated a government force under General Donato Guerra at Villa Nueva, after which they occupied the capital of the state, where the revolution was maintained, while General Martinez, with half of the insurgent troops, went to Tamaulipas. General Guerra, being reinforced by the government, continued his campaign against General Cadena, while General Rocha, with government troops, followed up General Martinez's insurgents, who were finally defeated by General Trevino. Meanwhile General Guerra was extinguishing the rebellion in Zacatecas. In time the rebels under Martinez at Tamaulipas were conquered by General Corella.

For the time armed resistance was arrested by Juarez. Still, the affairs of the country were in confusion, and there was no real principle of authority in the republic sufficient to produce anything but a sullen and temporary peace.

All through this period of strife, poverty, and insecurity Diaz refused to lend his name or influence to the disorders which continued to wreck the already miserable fortunes of Mexico. Bitter complaints poured in on him from all sides. The friends who had stood with him on so many battlefields tried in vain to move him from his farm into the field of national affairs.

Keenly alive to the fact that Diaz had wholly withdrawn his support from Juarez, and that he alone, perhaps, had strength enough to organize an effective opposition, the government newspapers began to attack and ridicule the general in his chosen retirement. To their brutality and stinging malice he made no reply. There can be little room for doubt that at this time Juarez, high-minded though he was, had become intensely irritated by Diaz's increasing popularity. Both men were natives of Oaxaca. It must have galled the pride of the



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President to see his own state heap honors on the head of one who had broken with him. How far Juarez was personally responsible for the pitiless and persistent flings at his old commander in the administration press can never be known. This stupid campaign of sneers and jibes at first puzzled and then exasperated Diaz, yet in such delicate conditions nothing could provoke him to emerge into the storm.

Nevertheless, the silent farmer of Oaxaca was not indifferent to the misfortunes of his people. In the calm of his seclusion he searched the story of his country, from the time when its altars dripped with human blood and its omnipotent priesthood were cannibals, down through the centuries of Spanish tyranny and spoliation, through the terrible struggle for independence, and the prolonged chaos of civil war which followed the adoption of an Anglo-Saxon democratic Constitution for the government of uneducated masses whose remote history and racial origin were still a mystery. Even now Mexico was trembling with her ancient passion for armed rebellion—futile and aimless. There was strength in this spirit of independence, this willingness to bleed and to die, if it could be kept from scattering into unthinking and unrelated disorder.

President Juarez now represented national stagnation. The triumph of the principles of independence and self-government was in itself almost barren of results. What was needed was a bold and powerful initiative that could turn from the past to the future and resolutely take the practical road to prosperity.

All this time Juarez was struggling with what used to be the chronic difficulty of Mexican administrations, an embarrassed treasury. The national expenses mounted up to \$20,000,000 a year, with a revenue in the neigh-

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borhood of only \$14,000,000. The demoralization of the customhouse service was so great, because of smuggling and official corruption and inefficiency, that it was estimated that out of every dollar paid in duties the government barely received from thirteen to eighteen cents.

Under such circumstances the maintenance of an effective police system was impossible. Crimes of violence increased at a terrifying rate. The custom of kidnapping rich men and holding them for ransom became common. Two years after Juarez had rejected Diaz's advice to adopt summary methods for the extermination of such crimes, the President asked the Congress for power to shoot kidnapers without trial. The debates were stormy and the government administration was violently attacked. The power was at first refused, but later, in the year 1869, it was reluctantly granted.

There was discontent in the army itself, for the officers were not only unable to get their current pay, but saw little hope of securing the arrears pay for their services against the French and the empire.

Commerce sank from bad to worse. Brigandage continued to flourish. The cities were unhealthy and ill kept.

Nearly all classes, good, bad, and indifferent, looked to Diaz to remedy these evils. That the disaffection and discontent in Mexico was real, and existed independently of Diaz, is proved by the fact that there were rebellions against the government in 1870 in territories so far separated as the northwest of the republic and the peninsula of Yucatan, thousands of miles apart.

Looking deeply into the intolerable condition of the country, Diaz gradually came to the conclusion that in order to secure a permanent peace, in which the work of developing the riches of the country and the intelligent

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employment of its energies might begin, it would be necessary to direct certain elements of strife into a fixed course, with a sane and practical policy in view, and to achieve this he must himself take the lead.

Still hoping that the country might be saved from a return to anarchy by peaceful methods, Diaz was again elected to the Congress in September, 1870. On his arrival in the capital he was at once surrounded by the leaders of the opposition to Juarez, who urged him to unite the progressive elements of the country by assuming the general leadership of the movement. Crime was rampant, industry was prostrated, capital had been frightened out of business. Diaz was under no obligations to the President, who had deeply wounded his pride and persecuted his friends. He had written from Oaxaca to Juarez, telling him in plain terms that he would accept no favors from him and that he could not support his administration. Nevertheless, he hesitated before renouncing the great Zapotec, even for the sake of his country. He found the new Congress to be as garrulous and futile as that in which he sat as a deputy in 1861. It wasted its time in talking and in obstruction. Diaz saw no hope of peace and of prosperity in legislative debates or parliamentary intrigues. The demand of events was for executive enterprise, strength, and courage.

Disgusted by the noisy quarrels of the Congress and the executive weakness of the national administration, the general returned to La Noria and resumed work on his sugar cane.

The principle of civil war was again working powerfully in the nation. In 1871 there was a rebellion at Tampico, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Maximo Molina, who used government troops to head the uprising and put Tampico in a state of defense. On June 11th Gen-

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eral Rocha, representing the government, attacked the city with great bravery and, after a battle of an hour and a half, captured it. The leaders were executed. The Maya Indians of Yucatan withdrew from the principal towns and remained indefinitely in arms against the government.

Notwithstanding the general confusion and dissatisfaction, Juarez again entered the field in 1871 as a candidate for a fourth term as President, and his minister, Lerdo de Tejada, was nominated as his opponent. The news caused a great political upheaval.

In this crisis Diaz consented to be a candidate for President against Juarez. It is said that if Diaz had not previously withdrawn his support from Juarez, that the President would have refused to be a candidate and would have proposed the general as his successor. However that may be, the electoral campaign was a bitter one. The supporters of Diaz claim that he received a majority of the votes. Even Don Matias Romero, the brilliant statesman and diplomatist, who served in the cabinets of both Juarez and Diaz, deliberately committed to writing in 1892 his opinion that "in the presidential election held in June and July, in 1871, General Diaz received a greater number of votes than Juarez himself, notwithstanding the latter's great service to his country, and that he was Constitutional President of the Republic during the election."

In spite of this, the new Congress, which was dominated by the President's partisans, declared Juarez elected President for another term. The opposition was roused to a high pitch of fury. Juarez was loudly accused of having falsified the results of the election in order to retain power which he did not know how to use. Foreseeing this, the governor of the state of Nuevo

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Leon, General Trevino, had publicly renounced Juarez's government and had declared Diaz to be the President of Mexico. Two weeks after the announcement of Juarez's reelection by the Congress there was an armed uprising against him in the capital, the insurgents seizing the arsenal. This rebellion was headed by Generals Negrete, Chavarrie, and Toledo. Juarez was dining in the palace when he heard of the outbreak and he sent General Rocha with a brigade of infantry to attack the arsenal, and General Guerra with a brigade of cavalry to cut off all means of escape. General Rocha had attempted to resign from the army several times in order to take part with the opposition. Having the obligations of a soldier, however, he captured the arsenal at midnight after several hours of hard fighting. Juarez had most of the insurgent leaders promptly executed. Uprisings in other parts of the country were bloodily suppressed.

There had been a meeting of the leaders of the opposition to the Juarez government at the house of General Pedro Ogazon, later on Minister of War, in Mexico City. Here Diaz was entreated to put his strength into the movement and become the leader. The speakers insisted that only war could overthrow an administration perpetuated by fraud, and prevent Mexico from reverting to anarchy. Finally, the lawyer Vallarta, afterwards President of the Supreme Court, rose to his feet and in a passionate speech, pointing to Diaz, who sat silent and reluctant, cried out that if the general refused to lead a movement absolutely necessary to the life of the Mexican nation he was nothing more than a traitor. The general's eyes flashed and the blood came to his face, yet he clenched his teeth and remained mute.

But the slaughter of the insurgents in the capital

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moved to action the nature that had resisted all appeals before. The soil of Mexico was again being wet with Mexican blood. A ghastly vista of civil war opened itself to the experienced mind of Diaz. One resolute blow and the spilling of blood might be brought to an end.

With that vision before his eyes, the general, on November 8, 1871, signed and sent forth from his farmhouse at Oaxaca his celebrated political programme known as the "Plan of La Noria," in which he denounced the government, declaring that the forced and violent reelection of Juarez had placed the national institutions in peril; that a shameless majority in Congress had prostituted the national legislature to the executive power; that the judges had been converted into submissive agents of the executive government; that the sovereignty of the states had been sacrificed to the blind caprice of personal power; that the government had suppressed the will of the people by barbarous butcheries; that the public income was wasted and the national and foreign debts left unpaid, and that, in general, the promises of the Constitution had not been fulfilled. The "Plan of La Noria" proposed a convention of three popularly elected representatives for each state to adopt a programme of Constitutional reconstruction and select a President. The main burden of this protest was opposition to the indefinite continuation of Juarez in power.

The temper in which Diaz unsheathed his sword is suggested by the following characteristic extract:

"During the revolution at Ayutla I left school to take up arms out of hatred of despotism; in the War of the Reforms I fought for our cause; fighting against foreign invasion, I sustained the national independence

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until I re-established the government in the capital of the republic.

“ In the course of my political life I have given sufficient proofs that I do not aspire to power nor to office; but I have contracted grave obligations respecting the liberty and independence of the country toward my comrades in arms, whose co-operation has enabled me to achieve difficult enterprises, and toward myself, that I shall not be indifferent to public evils.

“ At the call of duty my life is a tribute which I have never denied to the country. My poor patrimony, which I owe to my grateful fellow citizens, improved by my personal labor, and whatever small endowments I have—I consecrate all from this moment to the cause of the people. If victory crowns our efforts, I will return to the quiet of my domestic hearth, preferring the frugal and peaceful life of the obscure farmer to the ostentations of power. If, on the contrary, our adversaries triumph, I shall have fulfilled my last duty to the republic.”

Thus Diaz once more took the field in arms. The old fighting look came into his face. In an act of supreme moral courage he had chosen between Juarez and Mexico.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### UNSHEATHING HIS SWORD AGAINST JUAREZ

THE result of the revolt against Juarez in 1871 justified the long reluctance of Diaz in accepting the leadership against such fearful odds.

It was a desperate and disastrous year for the man who was in time to make Mexico the wonder of Latin America. He who had maintained the cause of Mexican independence on so many battlefields was to be hunted like a wild beast.

Hardly had he consented to head the revolution, when the government sent a powerful force against Oaxaca, under Generals Ignacio Alatorre and Sostanes Rocha, and at the same time Juarez fomented a counter-revolution against the local administration of General Felix Diaz, who was governor of the state of Oaxaca, and was supporting the rebellion against Juarez under his great brother's leadership.

In the North the fight against the government was carried on by such generals as Trevino, Naranjo, Donato Guerra, and Garcia de la Cadena, but in Oaxaca the revolutionists were overwhelmed by the forces suddenly concentrated by the government.

There was but one chance to win under such perilous conditions. On November 19, 1871, Diaz issued from his headquarters in Huajuapam an appeal to the government troops to join him in saving the country from



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anarchy and corruption, and thus avoid shedding the blood of old comrades in arms. Nine days afterwards General Alatorre issued a counter-appeal from Acatlan, entreating the soldiers to stand up by the government. Under the tremendous pressure put upon them, the government troops decided to support Juarez. This unexpected turn of events forced Diaz to change his plan of action. Having failed to persuade the armies of Alatorre and Rocha to join him, he saw that the government forces were closing in irresistibly on Oaxaca from Puebla and that the counter-revolution in Oaxaca was growing stronger. It was all important that he should not allow himself to be captured and thus deprive the revolution of its leader.

Putting General Luis Teran in charge of the revolutionary forces in Oaxaca, Diaz swiftly marched from Huajuapam, avoiding the forces of General Rocha, and moved toward Vera Cruz. He was hotly pursued by a heavy force commanded by General Rocha, and to avoid a hopeless battle he moved rapidly over the states of Mexico, Puebla, Morelos, Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, and Vera Cruz, intending to return to Oaxaca. In the meantime General José Ceballos defeated 500 revolutionists under Matias Rosas, and on December 22d General Loaeza smashed the Diaz force under General Teran in the bloody battle of San Mateo Sindihui. This crushed the rebellion in Oaxaca.

With his forces dispersed, Governor Felix Diaz took refuge in the forests of the Pacific coast region. Adverse winds prevented him from escaping by sea and he hid in the mountains. He was captured by a force of Tehuantepec Indians from Juchitan, who first tortured and then murdered him, on January 23, 1872, leaving his mutilated body on the roadside.

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In January, 1872, Porfirio Diaz was holding his own with 500 or 600 men at Soyaltepec, in the north of Oaxaca, near the borders of Vera Cruz, and General Alatorre was massing infantry, cavalry, and artillery against him. At that time the leader of the revolution was ill.

Learning of the disasters to his followers in Oaxaca, Diaz took refuge in the heart of the Zongolica mountains near Orizaba.

So thoroughly did Diaz disappear from the sight and knowledge of men, that for a long time it was believed that he was dead. From time to time the government newspapers taunted the revolutionary elements by insisting that their leader was dead or had permanently withdrawn from the struggle. This period in Diaz's life has always been treated as an unfathomable mystery.

The truth is that when the general recognized the hopelessness of continuing the fight in the South under such circumstances, he decided to slip through the lines of his enemies, reach the North, where his followers would be in a better position to maintain the revolution, and vanish from sight until the psychological moment for striking arrived.

Strangely enough, all of the biographers of Diaz have failed to make any reference to this part of his extraordinary career, as though the adversities of the world's great men were not as interesting, and perhaps more instructive, than their victories.

Diaz secretly reached Vera Cruz, made his way to Havana, then to New Orleans, across the continent to California, taking ship down to Manzanillo, where he landed on Mexican soil again.

With an escort of about 100 mounted men he started to the North to visit and organize the revolu-

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tionary forces in Chihuahua and Sonora. On the way he was attacked by a strong government force, sent from Guadalajara. His escort was scattered and he was pursued for a long time. Yet now and then he brought his Winchester rifle to his shoulder and one of his pursuers dropped.

Disguised and accompanied by a single servant, Diaz was passed on from one secret escort to another through the country to the territory of Tepic. So carefully were his movements guarded that even General Mena, his devoted supporter, was unable for months to find any trace of his whereabouts, and it was only by following the trail from escort to escort that Mena was finally able to reach him.

The leader fled to the mountains of Tepic because in that part of the country the great and powerful bandit Lozada had broken the power of the government. This notable outlaw and his Indian followers had so cowed the government representatives that sometimes they did not dare to publish the laws in his mountain domain. He had even divided the lands among his Indians, and to prevent any interference had seized the small force of government troops. Here, at least, Diaz would be safe until he could have time to prepare to press his revolution to a successful conclusion.

The general found a home in the house of General Placido Vega. General Vega had been governor of Sinaloa, and, having been sent by Juarez to buy arms in California, had been prosecuted for malfeasance, and was himself a refugee.

It has been insinuated by the enemies of President Diaz that, in some way not specified, he aided the dread Lozada in invading one of the Mexican states. Nothing could be more absurd. Lozada saw Diaz several times,

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but never knew who he really was. One day General Vega introduced Diaz to Lozada as an artisan named Joaquin Iturbide. This was in the small town of San Luis de Lozada, about six miles from the city of Tepic. Ever after Diaz was known in that part of the country as Joaquin Iturbide.

While thus concealed from the pursuit of his enemies, Diaz was not idle. Soon after his arrival in Lozada's country a bronze founder from Sinaloa undertook to cast a large church bell in the atrium of the church of San Luis de Lozada. The bandit chief and the curé watched the operation. Diaz stood in the onlooking crowd of Indians. Just as the bell metal was about to be poured into the mold, he raised his voice and warned Lozada and the priest to stand back, as the casting might burst. At this the bandit asked him what he knew about such a matter. The disguised general answered that he was a bronze founder by occupation. As a matter of fact, he actually had cast bronze cannons during the War of the Reforms. Lozada then demanded to know whether, if the casting failed, he would undertake to make the bell. Diaz promptly consented. The casting turned out to be a failure, whereupon the future President of Mexico cast the bell with his own hands. It weighed a ton and is to-day still hanging in the church of San Luis de Lozada, a witness of his skill and resourcefulness. After this feat he was known among Lozada's people as "the Master."

Although Diaz was known only as a bronze founder, and nobody suspected the life of distinction, power, and thrilling adventure that lay behind the strong, grave face of "Joaquin Iturbide," there was something about him, something of dignity and quiet masterfulness, that won the respect of the people about him, and long after

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he disappeared from the bandit's stronghold, the deep-chested bronze founder with the commanding head and compelling dark eyes was still referred to as "the Master."

During this time the revolutionists in the North under General Trevino were pursued by a superior force of government troops under General Rocha. The main body of insurgents finally made a stand at the hill of La Bufa, near Zacatecas, under General Donato Guerra, who had resigned from the regular army to support Diaz. Here the revolutionists were routed. After this disaster Generals Trevino and Naranjo retreated to the state of Nuevo Leon, where they beat a government force near Monterey.

In the end of June, 1872, Diaz was found by his friends in the mountains of Tepic, and he promptly went to the state of Chihuahua to take command of the revolutionary troops gathered there by General Guerra. He immediately fought a battle against government forces under General Terrazas for possession of the important city of Chihuahua, and was victorious. But on July 18, 1872, he was surprised by news of the sudden death of President Juarez in Mexico City.

As the permanence of Juarez in power was the principal cause of the revolution, Diaz was ready to lay down his arms and support Lerdo de Tejada, who, as President of the Supreme Court, was the Constitutional successor of Juarez. At first the general resented the patronizing tone adopted by the new President in declaring an amnesty to Mexican citizens in arms. He called several councils of his generals and addressed a ringing protest to President Lerdo. For a few weeks it seemed as though Diaz's pride would not permit him to accept an amnesty which reflected on his patriotism; but in the interests of peace he finally abandoned the

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struggle and frankly recognized the validity of the existing government.

In the complete peace that followed, Lerdo was regularly elected President of the republic for the term beginning December 1, 1872. Diaz returned to his farmhouse in Oaxaca, where he was keenly watched by government agents, who knew that he had not been conquered, but had voluntarily withdrawn from the struggle.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### FIGHTING FOR AN ENDURING MEXICO

HAVING again sheathed his sword, Diaz sold his farm, La Noria, and bought a sugar plantation near Tlacotalpam, in the rich coast lands of the state of Vera Cruz. Here the general, in the blue cotton dress and sombrero of a common farmer, lived in a humble one-story plaster house and worked among his sugar cane from morning to night.

He had visited the capital and his name was roared by his friends, while honors were showered in upon him from many states. But his mind shrank from the clamor of politics. The country needed peace, in which its wounds could be healed and its strength nourished. Perhaps President Lerdo might satisfy the necessities of the nation, restore order, revive credit, and turn the mind of the Mexican people from politics and fighting.

Away on his lonely plantation, far removed from the scenes of his victories and sufferings, Mexico's greatest soldier toiled hard for his living. Not a word of complaint did he utter. He had sacrificed all for the sake of his cause. Now he was content to earn his bread in the sweat of his face and enjoy the dignity of peaceful labor, remote from the sounds of political agitation.

On the day of Juarez's death there was less than \$2,000 in the national treasury, a large part of the army was unpaid, and some of the civil employees of the gov-

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ernment had not received their salaries for a year and a half. The President's attitude of suspicion and hostility toward other countries had deprived Mexico of foreign capital. With little credit in the money markets of the world, and the internal resources of the country almost entirely exhausted, the Mexican people were without the means of developing the immense natural wealth of their states.

President Lerdo, however, began his term of office with everything in his favor. His prestige as the principal minister of Juarez, his high reputation as a man of intellect and learning, the peace which followed the withdrawal of Diaz—these and other conditions favored the success of his administration. But he had the mind of a lawyer and politician and was too much absorbed in legislative theories and the subtleties of partisan combinations to make a constructive and progressive ruler.

The mighty bandit Lozada, who for fifteen years had maintained his murderous reign in the mountains of Tepic, and who for political reasons had been protected in the past by Lerdo, offered to submit to the President. Later on, when his chiefs rebelled against his plan of peace, Lozada attempted to overthrow the national government. He rapidly gathered a powerful force of Indians, issued a "plan" on January 17, 1873, in which he called on the nation to assert itself, and sent an expedition of 2,000 men against Zacatecas, another of 3,000 men against Sinaloa, and with still another force of 7,000 men, which he himself headed, he marched against Guadalajara. These expeditions were promptly defeated. Lozada fled to the mountains of Alica, where he was surrounded, captured, and executed in the outskirts of Tepic. It is to the credit of Lerdo that this terrible enemy of society was destroyed during his administration.



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Lerdo also, in September, 1873, brought about the incorporation of the famous Reform Laws into the Constitution and reëstablished the Senate. The first railway of Mexico, from Mexico City to Vera Cruz, was opened on January 1, 1873.

Great hopes had been based upon the character and abilities of Lerdo, but his stubborn, unprogressive, and restrictive policy in foreign affairs and his dense, stationary attitude toward the development of the material resources of the interior failed to satisfy the aspirations of the country for substantial progress.

For a while the old partisans of Juarez joined with Lerdo in jealous opposition toward the friends of Diaz. This temporarily increased the President's strength. Soon, however, signs of public dissatisfaction began to appear in different parts of the republic. The people became restless. Peace had improved conditions of business, but the government was stagnant, official corruption was rampant, and everything was sacrificed in the presidential game of party politics. Long and loud was the cry for the reappearance of Diaz. In the Congress Lerdo was bitterly denounced and opposed. He refused to hear or see.

Millions of American dollars were waiting to connect the rich soil of Mexico with the United States by railways, through which the energizing currents of commerce could flow into the dying fields of Mexican industry. But Lerdo was in the thrall of the past, blinded and dulled by its passions and prejudices. His reply to all efforts to begin the financial and commercial regeneration of his country by opening up direct railway connection between the two republics was the rabbit-hearted, despairing epigram: "Between the weak and the strong there must be a desert." And the great

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wilderness of arid land and cactus which separated Mexico from her natural markets in the north was maintained in all its savage impenetrability, while Mexican commerce and industry, famished for the lack of capital and progressive methods, remained cut off from the vigor and enterprise of the United States.

On his distant plantation Diaz watched Lerdo with sheathed sword. The call for his services at the capital became so loud that in 1874 he was nominated as a candidate for deputy in the Congress. In great alarm the governor of Vera Cruz notified Lerdo that he would not be responsible for the result of the election, as the general was so popular in his district that it would be impossible to defeat him by any methods. Realizing what the reëntrance into politics of Diaz would mean to his administration, the President ordered the governor not to allow the election to take place. The governor tried by a trick to force the election so suddenly that the general's friends would not have time to get their votes in, but in spite of this Diaz was elected by a heavy majority.

When Diaz arrived in the capital, he organized a powerful group in the Congress. Many times he questioned the government and several times he defeated it in the Chamber.

Finally, Lerdo attempted to save his administration by getting rid of the aggressive leader of the opposition. He had decided to perpetuate himself in power and saw that it was important to have Diaz out of the country during the next presidential campaign. The general was pitilessly exposing the weakness and poverty of his policies.

The President sent a mutual friend to offer Diaz the post of Minister to Berlin.

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"I am not a diplomat," answered Diaz, "nor do I presume to serve my country as a diplomat. As I understand it, President Lerdo offers this honor to me as a favor. Tell him that I do not accept favors except from friends."

Even the astute Lerdo had forgotten that the soldier whose strength had maintained the republic in its most desperate days could not be turned from his duty by a bribe.

The country, still sunk in misery and poverty, drifted into disorders. In the beginning of 1875 General Rocha, the great soldier of the Juarez administration, attempted a rebellion against Lerdo, trying to draw with him the garrison of Mexico City which he had taken out of the capital for tactical exercises. His subaltern officers did not second him and he was arrested by the Minister of War personally and confined in the town of Celaya, from which he fled abroad. In Jalisco there was an armed conflict within the state, and General Ceballos had to assume political command of the state to reestablish order.

Instead of opening up the resources of prosperity, Lerdo occupied himself in party politics. Bad conditions grew worse. Lerdo was denounced on all sides. Still the President schemed to succeed himself in office. He, like Juarez, relied upon the abstract force of laws. Intoxicated by the theory that the printing of democratic principles can save all peoples in all conditions and at all times, he overlooked the tremendous fact that political institutions are powerful only to the extent that they express instincts and capacities of the people to whom they apply, and that government is an act, not a theory.

As Lerdo was denounced on all sides, the leadership of Diaz grew more popular. In the press, in the Con-

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gress, in the clubs, there were constant demonstrations in his favor. The government attempted to arrest the movement, which was becoming national and daily increased in strength, but the political force behind Diaz became tidal in its character.

There can be little doubt that at this time things were as bad, if not worse, than when Diaz renounced the government of Juarez four years before. Justice was prostituted everywhere to politics. The elections were a farce. The Constitution was ignored. Public instruction was practically abandoned. The President was openly preparing to keep himself in power by all means, fair or foul. While he remained in office Mexico would remain isolated from the rest of the world, prostrate, hopeless. Such conditions meant a sure reversion to civil war.

Suddenly, on January 1, 1876, General Hernandez issued at the little town of Tuxtepec, in the northern part of the state of Oaxaca, a "plan," denouncing the Lerdo government for its corruptions and tyrannies, and proclaiming an armed revolution. With 2,000 men he marched to the city of Oaxaca, took charge of the government of the state, and proclaimed General Diaz as Commander in Chief of the Army of Reorganization.

The whole country was thrown into an uproar of excitement and the Plan of Tuxtepec was supported in many states. It was not a mere military revolution, for its leaders were forced to go about raising men to fight. Mexico was weary of stagnation and futile politics, and was ready to break away from her discordant, wasteful past. A little more bloodshed and that would be the last. With Oaxaca in the hands of General Hernandez, the revolution spread through Puebla, Vera Cruz, Guerrero, Nuevo Leon, Jalisco, and Yucatan.

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Even General Ignacio Mejia, the Minister of War, began to form a party in his own interest and the army began to be demoralized, but Lerdo removed him from command and put General Escobedo in his place.

With the war cry ringing through the country, Diaz appeared suddenly in the North. On December 5, 1876, he had sailed from Vera Cruz in the company of General Gonzalez, once his enemy, now his devoted friend and follower. Making his way through the United States he reached the northern frontier of Mexico, and from the Texas side he organized the revolution in the northern states by letters and telegrams, with Brownsville as his headquarters.

At the frantic request of Lerdo, the government of the United States ordered its commanding officer at Ringold Barracks, on the Rio Grande, to suppress any attempt at an armed invasion of Mexico from the American side. This order was aimed at Diaz, who was getting ready to burst into his own country.

The American officer promptly invited the Mexican commander on the other side of the river to come over and dine with him, so that he could explain his instructions to suppress the Diaz expedition. But while they were at dinner they received news that Diaz had crossed the Rio Grande with a handful of Mexican volunteers and had captured a small town. Again his promptness and intelligent daring had saved his cause. The forty men with which he dashed over the frontier increased rapidly.

At Palo Blanco, a farm near Matamoras, he added a constructive programme to the Plan of Tuxtepec, in which it was promised, among other things, that all state governments adhering to the plans of the revolution should be recognized; reasserting the Constitution of

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1857, the Reform Act of 1873, and the December legislation of 1874; pledging the rigid maintenance of the legal rule prohibiting the reelection of presidents or governors; and providing for the election of a new national government within two months after the taking of the capital by the revolutionary army.

The contrast between the general denunciations in the Plan of Tuxtepec and this straightforward, terse, and definite amendment, which was entirely the work of Diaz's pen, shows the difference between him and most of the men associated in the revolt. His mind directed everything into practical channels and toward clearly defined, reasonable, and feasible ends. Not a word was wasted.

Then the general sent a ranchman to the city of Matamoras to tell the commander of the government forces that he must promptly surrender. How Diaz understood his impulsive countrymen! Hardly had the commander received the audacious message than, in a fit of wrath, he sent out his whole cavalry force to cut the revolutionists into pieces.

Foreseeing this passionate answer, Diaz made a swift detour, and in the absence of the government cavalry took Matamoras from the infantry and artillery left behind, capturing 700 prisoners and many cannon.

Just before starting the attack on Matamoras on April 2d, some of the general's officers reminded him that it was the anniversary of the storming of Puebla nine years before, and proposed a banquet in his honor. It was late in the evening when he heard of it.

"If we are to have a feast, let it be in the city of Matamoras," he said; and at midnight he gave the signal for the assault.

A few weeks later Diaz moved from Matamoras with

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the intention of attacking the city of Saltillo. The daring of the general may be judged by the fact that in attempting this bold operation he was accompanied by only 700 badly armed and inexperienced recruits. At Icamole he was attacked by General Fuero, at the head of more than 1,000 government troops, with artillery. At the beginning of the action Fuero advanced his skirmish line too far, whereupon Diaz ordered General Naranjo's insurgent force, which was concealed behind a hill, to swing around suddenly, and Fuero's whole body of sharpshooters was captured. Thus it happened that, although Diaz had to retreat, he left the ground with prisoners.

It has been said by the enemies of Diaz that after this disastrous fight he wept on the field. This was denied by those who accompanied him. Besides, it is utterly out of keeping with his character and with the iron courage he showed in the thrilling adventures which immediately followed it.

Aroused by the swift movements of Diaz in the North, President Lerdo sent General Escobedo against him with a strong army. Having only 700 recruits with which to face the thousands of well-drilled and thoroughly equipped troops advancing under General Escobedo, Diaz saw at once that his place was in the South, where his following was growing. Leaving General Gonzalez (afterwards President) and General Hinojoso (afterwards Minister of War) to attack and harass Escobedo's force, he hurried back to the United States and started for his native state, to lead his followers in a campaign against the national capital.

The story of that eventful journey is one of the most exciting chapters in the life of the man whose adventures recall the heroes of legend.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### HOW DIAZ WON THE PRESIDENCY

DISGUISED with a wig and smoked glasses, and traveling as a Cuban physician returning to Havana, Diaz embarked at New York on the mail steamer *City of Havana*, which was to touch at Tampico and Vera Cruz on the way to Cuba.

Thus masked, and carrying a case of surgical instruments to complete the deception, Mexico's great leader started back to take supreme command of the revolution.

When the steamer reached Tampico, a detachment of government troops took passage for Vera Cruz. Among them were officers who had been captured by Diaz at Matamoras only a few weeks before. In spite of his careful disguise, the officers recognized the general, and his keen eyes at once told him that he was known to his enemies.

To be taken as a prisoner meant almost certain death. Indeed, only a few weeks later, General Donato Guerra, his second in command, was captured and afterwards slain by the soldiers who were guarding him. Diaz understood the greatness of his peril. His country's life as well as his own depended on his personal courage and intelligence. He was being closely watched and there was death in the eyes of the soldiers who followed his movements.

It was late in the afternoon and the steamer was anchored far from the shore. In an hour it would be dark.



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Meantime he must avoid arrest, which might occur at any moment. Life or death was a matter of minutes. He must leap into the sea, take his chances with the man-eating sharks, and keep afloat till he could land under the cover of darkness.

Arming himself with a knife of razorlike sharpness to defend himself against the sharks, and stripping himself to his underclothes, the future master of Mexico went over the vessel's side and struck out for liberty.

He had not swam more than two or three thousand feet before he knew that his flight had been discovered and that a boat had been lowered to catch him. Already he could hear the sound of the oars.

It was a desperate man-hunt. The general was a powerful and skillful swimmer, and he drove himself through the water with steady strokes; but his pursuers gained on him. As they approached him he made for the open sea. Could he but escape them for a while the night might save him; and he put forth his utmost strength in the fearful race. Nearer and nearer they came. He could hear their voices. With mighty strokes he swam this way and that, in the hope of eluding them in the growing dusk. Still the boat followed his flight and crept closer. The oarsmen could hear him panting as he struggled through the waves for his life.

So near did his pursuers come that they struck at him with their oars, and he dived again and again to avoid the savage blows. It was getting darker. A few minutes more and he might throw them off the track. Summoning all his power, he dived under the boat. As he came up on the other side, the rowers shrieked with excitement and struck at him again, only to find that he had once more dived under the boat and struck out in another direction, swimming in circles, diving, and turning back

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on his track in a way that made it difficult to reach him in the fading light.

For an hour the terrible chase was pressed. Diaz grew weaker. As his muscles gave out, his movements became slower. He gasped for breath. He grew dizzy with exhaustion and constant turning. His eyes protruded. Yet he twisted and darted this way and that in the water in a last furious attempt to escape.

Suddenly the exhausted fugitive discovered that he had lost his way. The shore line at Tampico was too flat and low to be seen so far out by a man in the waves, but while daylight lasted Diaz knew that the bow of the steamer pointed toward the land. With nightfall he had lost this guide and had no way of telling the direction of the shore from the open sea.

Caught in this trap, the general surrendered, and was pulled into the boat, where he lay helpless from fatigue and unable to speak. He had been in the sea for more than an hour.

When the dripping prisoner staggered on board of the *City of Havana*, Lieutenant-Colonel Arroyo, in command of the government troops in the ship, insisted that Diaz should be turned over to him and court-martialed at once. The death of the general would perhaps end the revolution against Lerdo and bring a rich reward to his executioner. But the bloodthirsty Arroyo underestimated the character and resources of the man who only had been dragged out of the sea so tired that he could not stand. Reaching for a pistol in his stateroom, Diaz drew himself to his full height, squared his shoulders, set his teeth, and with the old look of power in his great eyes, he called upon the captain of the steamer for the protection of the American flag under which he sailed.

That sudden turn baffled Arroyo for the time. An

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American gunboat lay close by in the harbor, and its captain being called upon to prevent any violation of the American flag, offered to send Diaz back to the United States; nevertheless, the general refused to turn back and insisted upon continuing his journey, although he knew that the next port would be Vera Cruz, where the government forces would be waiting to take him at all hazards.

The destiny of Mexico trembled in the balance of war; Diaz must reach his forces without delay. Not a day could be lost.

An attempt was made to disarm the general, but knowing the danger he was in, he announced that he would die rather than surrender his only means of defense. It was then agreed that he should be considered under guard, and the steamer proceeded on her way to Vera Cruz.

That night when the ship was at sea, Diaz secretly appealed to the purser, A. K. Coney, to help him to get away from his enemies. He proposed to again attempt to swim to shore with the aid of a life preserver. Touched by the grit of the Mexican hero, the American agreed to assist him, but insisted that to intrust himself to the shark-infested waters so far from shore would amount to suicide. Another plan was adopted.

It was a black night. A storm was about to break over the sea. Everybody on board was nervous, anxious, watchful. Slipping quietly into the purser's cabin at an opportune moment, Diaz shut himself in a small clothespress. There was a sudden splash in the sea. The purser had thrown a life preserver overboard. The steamer rang with cries of the Mexican officers, who ran wildly along the deck, peering into the dark water in the hope of seeing the supposed fugitive. Arroyo was in a tremendous rage. He searched the vessel in vain. The victim had escaped.

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All this time Diaz sat in the bottom of the clothespress. The space was so narrow that he had to draw his knees up to his chin, and even then the door did not quite close.

The purser knew that he had done a dangerous thing. To draw suspicion from himself he boldly invited the Mexican officers to play a game of cards in his cabin. As they sat around the table, the general, doubled up in the clothespress, scarcely dared to breathe. His position was extremely painful, and to make matters worse, one of the officers tilted his chair back against the door of the press, thus crushing it against the knees of the hidden soldier, who did not dare to move, although he was in great agony.

During that almost intolerable ordeal Diaz heard the card players discuss his character with great freedom. He was bitterly denounced, but one or two spoke kindly of him. Purser Coney, anxious to avoid all distrust, loudly abused the man whom he had concealed in the room, expressing the hope that he would be caught and punished, as he deserved to be. So vehement were the purser's attacks upon the man he was protecting, that only his great pain kept Diaz from laughing outright.

For three days Diaz remained doubled up in the darkness, being fed with a few crackers from the good-hearted purser's pocket. Then the ship reached Vera Cruz.

This was the climax of danger for Diaz. The Captain of the Port, a strong partisan of President Lerdo, went on board the *City of Havana* with a guard, and insisted on searching the ship from one end to the other, in the hope of finding the victim. There was great excitement in the ship. The American captain protested against having his vessel searched by Mexican soldiers. The Captain of the Port, stirred by the hope of capturing

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such a distinguished prisoner as Diaz, announced that he would examine every inch of the vessel. Fortunately, there was an American gunboat in the harbor. The captain of the *City of Havana* appealed for protection. Then the American naval commander went on board of the steamer.

While the three captains were arguing the question on deck, a sailor found his way to Diaz's place of concealment and handed him a note written by the chief of the Vera Cruz customhouse, saying that his friends were ready to help him to liberty.

At this Diaz followed the sailor to an open porthole. He had hurriedly put on the clothes of a sailor. Thrusting his head out of the opening in the side of the ship he saw below him a cotton lighter, into which he was expected to drop. Turning his eyes upward he saw above him a row of faces looking down at him over the rail. With a start, he drew his head back. Thereupon the sailor whispered to him that the faces he had seen were those of his friends, who had, by a prearranged plan, crowded against the railing on deck so that his enemies should have no chance to look over.

In another moment Diaz crawled through the porthole and dropped into the lighter, creeping into the bow under the deck, where he stood up to his neck in water, while the loading of the lighter was finished and it was rowed to the shore. While the cotton was being removed at the dock, a government officer looked sharply into the dim bow of the vessel. "What's that?" he cried. Diaz shrank back, half-drowned, to escape detection. A false move and he would be lost. Just at that moment one of Diaz's alert friends leaped into the lighter, saw his leader's face in the uncertain light, and answered, "There's nothing here, señor."

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The crew of the boat pretended to quarrel as to whether they would make another trip to the ship. Finally, they rowed out of the harbor of Vera Cruz and made their way down the coast to a point agreed upon. Here the general landed and found a manservant with two horses waiting on the beach for him.

Leaping into the saddle, Diaz rode with his companion at full speed to get in touch with his forces. That evening he reached the stream known as the Boca del Rio. On the road he stopped at a peon's house to get information, when a body of government soldiers passed. This so frightened his attendant that he deserted. Notwithstanding this, the general was able to avoid recognition by the commander of the troops, and finding a boat at the river, he rowed himself over. He was now without a horse, but he took the road on foot. Presently he met a mounted man, who turned out to be a friend, and who gladly gave up his horse.

Thus, day and night, the leader of the revolution, dressed in a ragged sailor's suit, and with a pistol stuck in his belt, rode straight for his beloved Indian followers of Ixtlan, in the Zapotec mountains of Oaxaca, where as a stripling subprefect he had learned to make soldiers and heroes out of shambling, cowardly peasants.

As the leader drew near Ixtlan, tired and covered with dust, he saw figures moving down the rough mountain trails toward him. They were the Indian horsemen of his old villages, and as they caught sight of the strong, erect figure which they knew so well, in spite of the sailor's cap and strange blue clothes, they waved their sabers at him, and he rose in his saddle and greeted them afar with uplifted hand.

The dusky cavalrymen were followed by groups of Indians on foot, with rifles and wildly beaten drums.

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Down the road they poured, shouting his name. When he dismounted they swarmed about him, kissing his hand and calling him *padrino* (godfather). As the multitude pressed around him and the blanketed villagers joined the armed men in a wonderful procession of bright colors, roaring drums, flashing steel, prancing horses, and babbling voices, Diaz remembered that in his earlier days he had regularly paid the baptism fees for the children of the Indians, and that in the crowds which came to kiss his hand now were his godchildren grown up.

Riding up the trails, he found the mountaineers advancing in troops to meet him, and the hillsides reverberated with the sound of their drums as they marched before and behind him, while the general population, picturesque beyond words to describe, filled the air with its shouting.

In the village of Ixtlan Diaz dismounted and made a speech to the multitude. The Indians assembled in the plazas and plazuelas with rifles and drums. Dozens of the Zapotec villages poured armed men into Ixtlan. The general went from one band to the other, addressing them and stirring up their fighting spirit, as in the days when he proved to them that a Zapotec mountaineer could be a good soldier. In those ranks were men he had first called from blanketed sloth to serve their country in arms; men whom he had taught to read and write; men whom he had led for years in battle; men for whose children he had stood sponsor in the church—and as he stood before them, paled and thinned by hardship, but with the old look of command in his strong face, they lifted their heads high and their eyes shone with pride. There among the wretched cabins of a remote mountain village, he invoked the soul of Mexico to war for the sake of peace.

Three battalions were immediately organized in Ixt-

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lan, and with them Diaz marched down into the valley of Oaxaca to his native city, which promptly surrendered to him. The governor of the state was friendly to him, but being in the power of Lerdo, had been compelled to obey the national government.

Once in possession of Oaxaca the general organized his forces rapidly. The spirit of the revolution grew. In August the revolutionists under General Guerra had been beaten at Tamiapa, whereupon Guerra had retreated to Chihuahua, where he was captured and slain.

But in September a packed Congress declared that Lerdo had been reëlected President. This election was notoriously corrupt and illegal. It was a direct challenge to the courage and self-respect of the country. In his greed to retain power, the President had forced himself into office against the will of the people and had trampled the electoral laws under his feet.

So gross were the frauds that even his Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, José Maria Iglesias, publicly denounced the election as illegal, disowned Lerdo's authority, and, declaring that he, himself, had succeeded to the presidency under the Constitution, retired to Guanajuato, where Governor Antillon, with 2,500 soldiers, supported him as President *ad interim*.

Diaz pushed northward with his troops, organizing as he marched. The Lerdo government sent out General Alatorre with an immense force to crush the revolution at a single blow. When the two armies met at Tecuac, in the state of Tlaxcala, on November 16, 1876, it was recognized by the generals on both sides that the battle would be decisive. The government forces greatly outnumbered the revolutionists, and Lerdo boasted in the capital that in a few hours Diaz would be a prisoner or a fugitive.



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In the battle of Tecuac, Alatorre's troops fought stubbornly until they were demoralized by a terrific charge led by Diaz in person. Before they could recover from the effects of this onslaught, reinforcements under General Gonzalez reached Diaz, and the Lerdo army was routed. Diaz captured more than 3,000 prisoners.

After this complete victory, Diaz made a triumphal march to the city of Puebla, which was surrendered to him without a blow, and as he rode through the streets he was greeted as the deliverer of the nation from confusion, weakness, and corruption.

Four days after the decisive fight at Tecuac, President Lerdo fled with his ministers from the capital. He took ship at Acapulco and went to New York, where he lived until his death on April 21, 1889, when in spite of his revolutionary plots to regain power, President Diaz attended his funeral.

With 12,000 soldiers, the hero of the revolution made his formal entry into the City of Mexico on November 23, 1876.

It was a thrilling scene. The great crowds which lined the roads and streets shrieked the victor's name continually. Some threw themselves on the ground; some wept with excitement. Not only did the humbler part of the populace greet him, but grave business men, financiers, landowners, stood uncovered among the shouting Indians as Diaz rode to the national palace at the head of his army. In the vast plaza of the Zocolo, on which both the Cathedral and the national palace front, a mighty multitude was gathered, and the sound of voices was like the beating of the sea on a hollow shore.

Dressed in his general's uniform, Diaz passed before the roaring crowds, erect, grave, looking straight ahead, as if he saw a great vista opening before him—not as the

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winner of a prize, but as one who solemnly assumed a responsibility whose weight had crushed two generations of his countrymen.

On entering the national palace he took possession of the supreme executive power of the nation. Leaving General Juan N. Mendez in command of the capital, he moved rapidly to Guanajuato, where Iglesias was attempting to carry on a national government. Iglesias tried to make terms of compromise with Diaz, but his proposals were rejected. He retreated to Guadalajara, where General Ceballos had a strong division, and then made his way to Manzanillo, thence to Mazatlan, and embarking there, fled by sea to San Francisco.

Being victorious throughout the republic, the general provided for a Constitutional government by ordering a general election, and in May, 1877, the new Congress canvassed the votes and declared that Diaz had been elected President.

Thus the barefoot son of the humble Oaxaca inn-keeper, now a man of forty-six years, entered upon the work of turning Mexico from her delirious, destructive, and miserable past.

## CHAPTER XXX

### THE SOLDIER BECOMES A NATION'S MASTER

THERE is nothing more dramatic in the life of Diaz than his swift grapple with highway robbery. Not as President, but as commander of the military forces, he decreed sudden death to bandits wherever they were caught. The whole power of the nation was concentrated behind this stern order. Hundreds of bandits were shot down on the roads of Mexico within two or three weeks after he assumed power. It was not police work, but war. No rights-of-man theories or legal technicalities were permitted to interfere with this work of exterminating the armed enemies of society.

Yet among those who preyed upon travelers and terrorized towns and villages were men who had served the republic as soldiers and had been turned out of their uniforms without means of livelihood. Accustomed to forage for existence in time of war, they continued their spoliation in time of peace. Nothing dulls the moral sense or brutalizes the character more rapidly than guerilla warfare, in which fighting and plundering are almost inseparable.

It is not surprising, therefore, that some of the bravest soldiers of Mexico had become bandits. Indeed, many of the men who had followed Diaz in his most desperate struggles for Mexican independence were now brought

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face to face with instant death, for his order made no distinction between friend or foe, patriot or traitor.

— His clear mind saw that it would be a mockery of government to talk about individual rights and Constitutional forms of justice while armed robbers held the highways of the nation, and he slew the outlaws without pity wherever they were found, until an unspeakable terror of the new government spread to the remotest mountain strongholds of crime.

At the same time he caused it to be known that all bandits who were ready to give up their criminal life might find safety and employment by surrendering promptly to the government.

It was known that the word of Diaz could always be trusted, and as in former days the merchants of Mexico loaned vast sums on his bare word, although they refused to advance a dollar on the government's credit, so now the bandits poured in from the mountains and the roads, gave up their arms, and relied for their lives on the honor of the man who had opened a way back to honest society for them.

With a shrewdness born of long experience and a deep knowledge of human nature, Diaz created a national mounted rural police out of these men and gave them a chance to redeem their names by hunting down the incorrigible bandits.

They came to him in all manner of dress, bold, strong men, with fierce eyes, and faces tanned by the sun and hideous with scars. With trembling tongues, sometimes with tears, they told the master of Mexico how they had been driven to brigandage because they could find no other occupation.

He talked to them one by one, looked them straight in the eyes, explained that a new day of law and order

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had dawned in Mexico, and in a few direct words convinced them that, quite aside from the bloody death that awaited all bandits in the future, they would earn a better living by serving the nation as good citizens.

One day a famous bandit chief appeared in the national palace, deep-chested, wide-shouldered, a mighty hulk of a man, with formidable eyes, and skin tanned almost black by the sun. For many days he had been hunted. No robber in the country was more feared. This man had once been a gallant officer in the service of the republic. Diaz knew him at once as one of his most loyal and heroic fighters. The bandit leader acknowledged that he had been leading a wicked life, but protested that he had been gradually led into it by the conditions of the country and the necessities pressing upon him at a time when neither he nor his followers could find employment. Reminding Diaz of how he had fought for the country under his command, his rough, hard countenance broke with emotion as he begged for a chance to win back his good name and take his proper place in Mexico. The great robber was at once appointed chief of the new national police, and no man served the country with more bravery, honesty, or devotion.

This was the origin of the celebrated *Rurales*, one of the finest bodies of constabulary in the world, comparable only to the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Canadian Mounted Police, the Italian *Carabinieri*, and the *Guarda Civil* of Spain—yet with a character of its own. The promoters of disorder and crime became the guardians and guarantors of peace and order.

“We began by punishing robbery with death and requiring the execution of culprits within a few hours after they were caught and condemned,” says President Diaz. “It had been the habit to cut the telegraph lines.

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We ordered that when the wires were cut, and the chief officer of that district failed to catch the criminal, he should himself suffer; and should the cutting occur on a plantation, the proprietor who failed to prevent it must be hanged to the telegraph pole nearest to the point where the wire was severed. These, of course, were military orders.

“It is true that we were harsh. Often we were harsh to the point of great cruelty. Yet it was necessary then to the life and progress of the nation. The results have justified it. It was right that a little blood should be shed, so that much blood should be saved. The blood we shed was bad blood; the blood we saved was good blood.

“Mexico needed peace, even an enforced peace, that the nation might have time to think and work. The army began the task; education and industry carried it on.”

The soldier had become a statesman. Within a few weeks the bandits of Mexico had vanished, never to reappear, and the roads of the republic were safe. Diaz had acted on the old Japanese military precept: “When you have an enemy in your power, never completely surround him.” Not only had he exterminated the most powerful criminals in the country and made travelers secure, but he had drawn thousands of brave but misguided Mexicans back into the fold of society.

The immensity of this feat can hardly be understood in these days of Mexican orderliness and progress. For many years the robbers had been so bold that they seized villages and forced loans from them, sometimes burning the public buildings and occasionally carrying off the officials and holding them for ransom. In 1872 bandits carried off a schoolmaster of the village of Santa Maria, in the district of Otumba, sold him to other bandits for

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\$100, who, in turn, sold him again for \$200, and presently he was sold a third time for \$300 to a band who demanded a ransom of \$500. After a terrible fight with a robber who was guarding him, the schoolmaster escaped with nineteen wounds.

So amazing was the power of the bandits that Señor Escandon, who was building the Vera Cruz railway, paid \$500 to a band of armed thieves to escort him to the sea-coast. This was not an uncommon custom. He arrived safely, but on the way back the band robbed two parties of travelers.

The stage coach running between the capital and Puebla was sometimes robbed four times on a single journey, and the fourth band, finding nothing else to take, would strip the passengers naked, not even sparing women. This happened so many times that women often carried newspapers with them in the coach, in order to cover their bodies when their clothes were gone.

It is a literal fact that when the Puebla coach was due in Mexico City, porters were stationed in the courtyard of the Hotel Iturbide with blankets to throw over the female passengers as they emerged, and the male guests were requested to withdraw out of sight in order not to embarrass the unhappy travelers.

When Marshal Bazaine was in command of the capital he filled the Puebla coach one morning with Zouaves dressed in women's bonnets and gay crinoline skirts. Each soldier had a pair of pistols. The coach had not gone more than four blocks through the main street of Mexico City when it was surrounded by bandits. Within a minute the pavement was strewn with dead and dying robbers—as the supposed women leaped forth and opened fire.

If that could happen in the capital itself, in the midst

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of a veteran French army, what must have been the conditions on the roads and in the remote villages before Diaz swept brigandage out of his country in one sudden, short campaign? All the talking of blatant politicians, the grandiose oratory of congresses, or the solemn but helpless formulas of laws, however wise or just, had failed to accomplish the remarkable results achieved in a few weeks by his straightforward strength, based on the idea that government is not theory, but action, and that order is an indispensable precedent to law.

For more than thirty years President Diaz has been at the head of the Mexican republic, and during all that period, in good times and bad, that practical, effective thought has dominated his statesmanship and has made it possible to bring civic and social healing to Mexico.

Shallow theorists, would-be revolutionists, disappointed place-hunters, and outright blackmailers have sought in vain to convince the outside world that the great President of Mexico is a brutal tyrant who has crushed his country under the weight of corruption, backed by a cruel and slavish soldiery. The answer to these stupid and malicious agitators is the steady rise of Mexico to the rank of a powerful and respected nation, the obvious pride with which all decent Mexicans pronounce the name of Diaz, and the prosperity which his strength, energy, intelligence, and untiring devotion have brought to the nation. One has but to contrast the lawless chaos, the helplessness of the masses, the utter misery and degradation of life in Mexico when Diaz first became President, with the orderly, thriving country of to-day, to realize the criminal malice or ignorance which prompt briefless lawyers, threadbare adventurers, and sensational scribblers to second the futile activities of political plotters who have neither the influence to se-



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cure a powerful following nor the sense to understand that the day of Mexican revolutions belongs to the distant, dismal past.

Having restored order, Diaz bent himself to the mighty task of reviving the national credit. Nine weeks after he entered the capital at the head of his victorious army the time limit for a payment of \$300,000 to the United States expired. This was the first installment of an award of \$4,000,000 in favor of the United States in the liquidation of international claims settled by a mixed commission. It was tremendously important that this first payment should be made. The whole world of finance was secretly watching. Diaz was not yet elected President of Mexico. He was a soldier fresh from the field, at the head of a country whipped up to a high degree of suspicion and hostility regarding foreign countries, and irritably sensitive on the question of foreign debts. Would he rise to the height of his responsibilities?

The nation was bankrupt. The public employees were unpaid. The army was clamoring for its arrears. It was a cruel time, and an embarrassing one, for the payment of \$300,000 to a nation which had stripped Mexico of half her territory. It meant a bitter sacrifice to the new government to raise such a sum; yet Diaz's unclouded mind saw that the prompt payment of this money, at all hazards, would be a signal to the world that Mexico was prepared to meet her sacred obligations on time and under any circumstances. Thousands of officials were compelled to go unsatisfied for their pay, but the \$300,000 was punctually delivered to the United States. Within a few days that act of scrupulous honesty was made known in the money markets of the world and was instantly reflected in the rising price of

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Mexican securities. In reporting the matter to the new Congress, Diaz said :

“The executive was determined at all risks on saving the national honor, and, imposing the painful but necessary sacrifices upon the republic and its servants, has happily been able to escape the grave difficulty and to make the payment with exact punctuality. This sacrifice will not be sterile. It should contribute to the good name of Mexico and lift up her credit abroad.”

That was a new note in Mexican finance, which rang clear in all countries, at least while Diaz had control of affairs.

The new President, fulfilling one of the most serious promises of the revolution, presented an amendment to the national Constitution forbidding the reelection of the President and the governors of the states. Looking back through the long decades of Diaz's continuous power in Mexico, this Constitutional amendment might sound almost farcical, at least hypocritical, to one unfamiliar with the subsequent national history. The truth is that it was a sincere effort to remove from Mexican politics one of the most prolific causes of war.

Afterwards, when Diaz had shown that the nation could stand like a rock against the shocks of time and circumstance ; when he had made one nation of the divided Mexicans ; when his honest statesmanship had made the word of Mexico a golden word throughout the world ; when commerce, industry, and education had begun to take hold on the people ; when hundreds of millions of dollars of foreign capital poured into the country, fertilizing enterprise ; and when the love of peaceful labor was revived in the masses of the Mexican people—then the nation abolished the law that prevented a president from

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succeeding himself in office, in order that the splendid and peaceful development of Mexico should not be interrupted, and that the national leadership and direction should not again be thrown into the hazards of party politics, at least not until the influence of peace, industry, and education, and the conservative, consolidating tendency of accumulating wealth, together with a deepening appreciation of the responsibilities as well as the rights of popular government should make it possible for Mexico to change presidents without serious disaster.

Public order having been restored, and the signal given for the revival of public credit, President Diaz now gave proof of his broad and farsighted statesmanship by his dealing with the American railway question.

During his first term of office two great railway lines through the United States had been completed up to the northern frontier of Mexico. It was proposed that these railways should be connected with the City of Mexico by lines to be constructed principally with American capital. Up to that time there was but one important railway in the republic, the short line connecting the capital with the port of Vera Cruz. The proposal to unite Mexico to the United States by two great railway systems—the Mexican Central Railway and the National Railroad of Mexico—was not only an economic question of the first magnitude, but it was also a perilous political question from which most Mexican statesmen shrank in doubt or fear.

For many years the public mind of Mexico had been educated to regard the purpose and policy of the United States with distrust. It was a common thing for the popular political orator to beat his breast in public and defy the great monster of the North. Even President Juarez shared this feeling of doubt and hostility, and resented the well-meant efforts of the Washington govern-

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ment to aid his administration at the close of the War of Intervention. Both he and President Lerdo did their utmost to set the Mexican mind against the United States as a greedy, sordid neighbor ever alert for an opportunity to invade and spoil Mexico of her territory. It was this policy of timidity and despair that found utterance in President Lerdo's saying: "Between the weak and strong there should be a desert."

The immense energy and practical intelligence of the United States were ready to burst into the famished fields of Mexican industry, agriculture, and commerce, carrying with them streams of wealth. The spirit of American enterprise had been newly stimulated and strengthened by the international success of the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia. The eyes of the world were turned toward the Western hemisphere, whose political institutions were now firmly established. The unshakable strength of Diaz's administration, its scrupulous promptness in meeting its obligations, and its demonstrated ability to maintain order and to protect property rights as well as personal safety, drew attention to Mexico as a promising field for the investors and business pioneers of all countries.

But heretofore it had been a country whose chief occupations were politics and war. Bent on political independence, and fearing the great progressive nations, Mexico had set up a cowardly hermit policy of isolation, and, almost like the Chinese and the Coreans, had cut herself off from the energizing and fructifying influences of direct and continuous contact with her natural markets in the flourishing North, and sat withered by old prejudices and passions.

Already Diaz had shown to the world that a new Mexico had come into existence. He had bravely met

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the issues of public order and public credit. But would the iron soldier have the moral courage and largeness of vision to risk a conflict with the fierce and unreasoning bigotry of his countrymen by throwing the republic open to international commerce through direct railway communication with the United States? The influence of the President over all branches of the government was so great that the matter depended on his individual judgment and will.

This question, upon which the future of the republic hung, was decided at a Cabinet meeting. The ministers were divided in opinion. The President listened in silence to the arguments of both sides. At the close of the debate he made his memorable decision—in substantially these words:

“It may be true that in opening up Mexico to direct railway communication with the United States, we are putting ourselves in danger—that we are providing an entrance to a power which some day will attempt to absorb our territory. I do not share this fear. Nevertheless, if such a danger exists, we are more likely to bring on the conflict immediately by denying a natural and necessary outlet to the legitimate private enterprise of that country and declaring in effect that we look upon the United States as an enemy. By consenting to the new international railways we not only say to the people of the United States that we do not fear direct and close association with them, and that we desire and expect their friendship, but we will bring capital and skilled energy into Mexico and rapidly develop our resources; so that, by such a policy, we can at least put off any danger of territorial spoliation until we are strong enough to meet and resist it.”

That note of high, wise, and peaceful leadership was heard and answered throughout the world of enterprise.

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It was the beginning of the great era of railway building that has transformed Mexico and made possible her wonderful development.

When President Diaz took possession of the national government in 1876, Mexico had only 407 miles of railways to serve a total territory of more than 767,000 square miles. Not only did he consent to the international railways, but he put forth all his strength and intelligence to stimulate railway building in all parts of the country. To-day there are more than 15,000 miles of railways in Mexico, and the capital invested in the country by citizens of the United States alone aggregates, in Mexican currency, about \$2,000,000,000.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### ORDER WAITS ON STRENGTH, LAW ON ORDER

It is an old saying that one finds most sticks and stones under the tree on which the best apples grow. This is true of men as well as trees. History offers no example of a great or good man who has not been a target for envy and malice.

One of the most persistent slanders whispered about by the enemies of President Diaz is that in 1879 he ordered a cold-blooded massacre of his opponents at Vera Cruz. This tale has been repeated for many years with a hideous elaboration of details. Every time a handful of adventurers falls into the old delirium of revolutionary dreaming—forgetful that Mexico is now a powerful and united nation—the story of Vera Cruz starts afresh, with ghastly suggestions of a guilty despot decreeing the murder of innocent men out of a sheer lust of blood.

The plain truth of this matter, which will be set forth here, shows that the Vera Cruz legend has no more foundation than other attacks upon President Diaz and his government which have recently been made by ignorant and sensational writers, serving, perhaps unconsciously, the sinister purposes of fanatics, disappointed office seekers, contract promoters, blackmailers—hoping to have their silence purchased—and revolutionaries

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whose activities have failed to extend beyond the limits of local riots.

While President Diaz, in his first term of office, was laying wide and deep the foundations of Mexican peace and progress, seeking to turn the minds of the people into ways of industry and to establish a balance between the income and the expenditures of the nation, Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, whom he had driven out of power, remained in New York, and attempted from that distance to accomplish another revolution. The brilliant lawyer and politician could not realize the fact that with the rise of Porfirio Diaz to supreme power the revolutionary period of Mexican history had come to an end.

In furtherance of Lerdo's conspiracy, General Escobedo invaded Mexico from Texas, sending armed expeditions into the states of Nuevo León, Coahuila, and Tamaulipas. This insurrection was suppressed. In recognition of Escobedo's past services to the country, however, President Diaz magnanimously pardoned him.

General Diego Alvarez, in the South, refused to work with the national administration, and threatened an uprising, but his opposition was peacefully overcome by the President's persuasive reasoning.

In 1879 General Negrete issued an address to the country calling on the partisans of Lerdo to rise in arms. From his hiding place in the City of Mexico, Negrete continued for some time to send out fiery letters invoking the spirit of war. His appeals were ignored.

President Diaz watched these signs of the old revolutionary spirit with keen eyes and stern face. He knew that another serious civil war would throw Mexico back into chaos, bankrupt and discredited, and perhaps prepare the way for the loss of Mexican independence. The



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whole destiny of the nation now depended upon his vigilance and strength.

Just then General Fuero, one of Lerdo's bravest conspirators, arrived in Vera Cruz from the presence of his leader in New York. Fuero was promptly arrested by General Luis Teran, the military commandant of Vera Cruz, a veteran companion-in-arms of Diaz, and one of his most fanatic followers. General Teran seemed to have a general idea that every opponent of the President deserved death. He was a nervous, excitable man, of great courage but rash judgment. Having discovered what he considered compromising evidence against Fuero, the military commandant was for executing his prisoner at once. There was no personal reason why President Diaz should wish to spare Fuero, who had defeated his small force in the battle of Icamole. Yet as soon as he heard of his enemy's grave peril, he caused Don Pablo Macedo, then Subsecretary of the Interior, to be sent to Teran, with orders that the prisoner should be preserved unhurt, and that his case should be impartially investigated by the ordinary court. Teran violently declared that he would not consent to the escape of such a traitor, but Macedo repeated the President's orders with such sternness that the commandant surrendered. Presently the court discharged Fuero for lack of convincing evidence. Thus President Diaz saved the life of the man who had defeated him in the field in the supreme crisis of his life.

The last attempt of Lerdo's supporters to launch the country into another period of revolution was in June, 1879. In that month the crew of the military dispatch ship *Libertad*, which was at the port of Alvarado, about thirty miles from Vera Cruz, rebelled against the government, and started with their vessel for Vera Cruz. It

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was also reported that the crew of another armed ship, the *Independencia*, had mutinied.

As this startling news reached President Diaz, he was secretly informed by two artillery officers that there was a plot in the garrison of Vera Cruz to rise in revolt as soon as the rebellious ships should appear in the harbor. Not an hour, not a minute, could be lost. The peace of the country depended on swift, sure, stern action. Already General Teran had warned the President of a revolutionary plot against the government.

Then came the following telegram from Teran:

“*Hay militares complicados en la conspiracion. Si se levantan los fusile?*” (“There are soldiers complicated in the conspiracy. If they rise, shall I shoot them?”)

There was no time for debate. The lives of thousands might be sacrificed by an instant's delay, for at that very moment Diaz had been informed that the mutinous *Libertad* was entering the harbor of Vera Cruz, the prearranged signal for the rising of the garrison; and there could be but one answer to a revolt among regular troops.

The President answered Teran's question by telegraphing three words:

“*En caliente, si.*” (“If in the heat of action, yes.”)

These two telegrams have been obtained from the official archives of that time and tell the whole story of Diaz's connection with the matter.

It will be seen that the President authorized Teran to shoot soldiers, and only “if in heat,” that is, in the very act of rebellion. The most ingenious mind cannot

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twist out of those three words, taken in connection with the message to which they were a reply, the slightest authority to execute civilians; with or without trial.

In a tremendous passion, General Teran had nine men summarily shot. Several of them were civilians. President Diaz removed the commandant from his post and had him court-martialed. The court found him guilty of exceeding his authority, and he confessed his offense, pleading in his defense his anxiety to save the nation from civil war. Thereupon, in view of Teran's manifest mental condition, and in consideration of his past services to the country on the battlefield, the court suspended all other penalties but the loss of his post. Soon afterwards Teran was confined in an asylum for the insane, where he died three years later, a raving lunatic.

This is the true and incontrovertible story of the famous "Vera Cruz massacre." It may be added that the families of the persons executed by Teran are to-day among the most devoted supporters of President Diaz.

The truth is, that while the President promptly and sometimes bloodily suppressed every effort of Lerdo and his friends to revive armed insurrection as an element in Mexican politics, he pursued a farsighted policy of compromise and conciliation. Even when Iglesias, who had attempted to seize the presidency, returned to the capital, he was allowed to live unmolested.

Another rebellion was attempted by Marquez de Leon, in Lower California, and General Ramirez Terron, in Sinaloa, but it was suppressed. Then things settled down into a prolonged peace. The maddest military adventurer began to understand that under the administration of President Diaz the government of Mexico could not be changed by revolution. To further secure peace,

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the President afterwards confirmed British authority in Belize, or British Honduras, exacting from Great Britain an agreement to prevent the smuggling of arms across the frontier to the rebellious and marauding Maya Indians of the Yucatan peninsula.

Notwithstanding the appalling condition of the country when Diaz assumed national power, both the internal and external affairs of Mexico rapidly prospered, and the most jumbled situations fell into order under his strong, intelligent leadership. In the first year of his administration the total income of the government was \$18,087,774, which included the amount left over from the previous year. In the following year the funds in the national treasury had increased to \$20,477,780, the greatest showing since the republic was restored in 1867. This fine result was produced without extraordinary taxes or unusual methods. Commerce increased by leaps and bounds.

Although the President performed prodigies in straightening out the public debt, economizing the public expenditures and making ready for the revival of industry in the country, his eyes were ever fixed on peace, prolonged, general, unbroken peace—a peace born of constructive and persuasive statesmanship, backed by strength, but to be maintained by force alone, when necessary—as the indispensable preliminary and accompaniment of national regeneration.

As the central idea of the “Plan of Tuxtepec,” under which Diaz led his successful revolution against Lerdo, was the prohibition of the reelection of presidents, and as Diaz himself had caused that solemn promise to be incorporated in the fundamental law of the nation, there were signs of general uneasiness and anxiety as the President’s first term of office drew toward a close.

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Ignorant or malicious critics of modern Mexico are fond of contrasting this attitude of Diaz, in his early days of power, with his continuous occupation of the presidency for almost a generation. The unbroken tranquillity and progress of the country and the unification of society, where before was strife, weakness, and hatred, is at once the explanation and justification of his course. Government cannot be reduced to the changeless limitations of an abstract creed. It must be judged by consequences.

There were many able men in Mexico who believed in 1880 that it would be a crime against the country for Diaz to retire from power and run the risk of a national reversion to civil war. The President recognized the force of their arguments. He saw that the life of the scarcely conscious nation might be exposed to overwhelming perils in the shifting exigencies of politics, when once his strong hand was removed from control. But he felt bound to obey the law which forbade the election of a president to succeed himself. He himself had proposed that law in the interests of peace. In spite of all pressure to remain in power, his sense of honor and his patriotic loyalty to the cause for which he had overturned Lerdo's government, compelled him to announce that a new president must be elected to succeed him. Nay, in his last message to the Congress before he withdrew from the national palace, without consulting his Cabinet, he added a sentence to that memorable document, declaring that he would never again accept the office of president. When the ministers saw what he had written they strongly protested and asked him to withdraw it; but he insisted upon his own way, and the message stood as he wrote it. The appeal of subsequent events and the sight of his country trembling on the edge

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of an abyss of unhappiness and shame afterwards persuaded him to change his mind and surrender to the logic of Mexican history. But in 1880 he insisted upon retiring at the end of his official term, thus satisfying the terms of the Constitution and the spirit of the revolution that carried him into national leadership and authority.

In this crisis he gave his whole support to General Manuel Gonzalez as his successor. This brave soldier proved to be a bungling and corrupt administrator, under whose very eyes the government was plundered and disgraced.

Yet, when Diaz withdrew from the presidency, the immediate need of Mexico was peace, above all things. Even honesty in administration was less important than strength to hold the young republic together. Without that, all other things were vain. General Gonzalez was a man of heroic and rugged force. That very year he had conquered and pacified the Indian rebels of Tepic, who had raided the country ever since their great bandit chief, Lozada, was slain; and he had brought the insurrection of General Terron to an end. He was personally loyal to Diaz, who had every reason to believe that he would be vigilant and honest. However, in throwing his influence in favor of Gonzalez, the main thing in Diaz's mind was not so much that he would prove to be a statesman as that his skill and courage as a soldier would be sufficient to prevent the old war spirit from wrecking the republic before the national consciousness was fully awakened and the influences of industry, commerce, and education had time to produce unity of effort and purpose and the love of peaceful labor, which is the most effective discourager of war.

Thus, with the indorsement of President Diaz, Gen-

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eral Gonzalez was elected President for the ordinary term of four years, and took office on December 1, 1880.

In an address to the nation, explaining the work of his administration, Diaz declared that without peace, secured at any cost, the ruin of the republic would be certain, and he promised to give his full support to Gonzalez.

"If before I die," he said in this farewell utterance, "morality is rooted in our society and in the public administration; if the poor man finds in his country bread and instruction, and if the rich man finds sufficient confidence to invest his capital in national enterprises; if from one end of the republic to the other the locomotive, with its robust voice, awakens and stirs all Mexicans into movement—such a beautiful spectacle will satisfy my desires; and if it is not given to me to see this, even after many years, I shall carry with me the hope that my children, as well as yours, will enjoy for a longer time that period of happiness in the preparation of which the author of their being has played a small part."

Having withdrawn from the presidency in obedience to the Constitution, Diaz gave an open sign that his sword was ready to support his successor by serving from December 1, 1880, to November 30, 1881, in the Gonzalez cabinet as Secretary of the Department of Fomento (promotion of public works, agriculture, mining, colonization, etc.). The master of Mexico, who had started up systems of railways and telegraphs all over the country; had made it possible to pay public officials and employees on time; had improved conditions so that the exports of Mexico increased in two years from \$24,000,000 to \$32,000,000; and had, in less than four years, raised his country in the eyes of the world by meeting every debt punctually, and by enforcing tran-

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quillity and order, now worked cheerfully in the Cabinet of his successor.

While serving in the Cabinet of President Gonzalez, Diaz initiated the work which converted the harbor of Tampico into a modern commercial port, and put his intelligence and energy into several other practical improvements. But presently he became aware that some of his colleagues were envious of his power, and he resigned his post.

Thereupon the people of his native state promptly elected him governor of Oaxaca. At the same time he was elected to the national Senate. Naturally he chose the executive rather than the legislative service.

As governor of Oaxaca, Diaz completely reformed the affairs of the state. He reopened schools that had been closed, and established hundreds of new schools. His interest in education seemed to go hand in hand with his interest in commerce, industry, and agriculture. The malevolent agitators who have sought to create the impression that this great nation-maker is a mere military leader, holding office in the midst of an unwilling people by armed force, ignore or suppress the evidence of his constant and fruitful service in creating and encouraging the means of peaceful development. It will not be forgotten that even while his army was besieging Maximilian's forces in the capital, Diaz used his military funds to continue the preparatory work for the drainage of the Valley of Mexico. So, too, when he escaped from his convent prison in Puebla and stormed the city of Oaxaca, even while he was organizing his army to sweep the invaders from his country, he showed the ultimate vision of his statesmanship by opening an important school for girls.

During his four years as President, his whole thought



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was taken up with the means of avoiding war in the future. Now that he had retired from the national palace, he showed the same spirit in governing Oaxaca. Its muddled finances were clarified, the extravagance of the administration was reformed, and the attention of leaders was drawn away from political intrigue to practical public improvements. It was at that time that Diaz made a vigorous effort to promote the building of a railway across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. His mind naturally went straight as an arrow to big and feasible public works. As a stripling military commandant he had done much to improve the sanitation and other material conditions of Tehuantepec; as governor of Oaxaca, which included Tehuantepec, he strove with all his strength to bring about the great interoceanic railway which afterwards, as President, he completed, with its two great modern ports, and opened to his country and the world. But his most distinguished services as governor of Oaxaca were in the direction of public education.

After reorganizing the administration of his state, Diaz retired and went to live in the City of Mexico.

In 1882 he met the beautiful daughter of Don Manuel Romero Rubio. This distinguished lawyer had been the principal minister in the Cabinet of President Lerdo. He was therefore the natural leader of Diaz's political opponents. His daughter Carmen, a singularly beautiful, intelligent, and highly educated young lady—she is to-day easily the most beloved and graceful figure in her country—attracted the attention of the soldier-statesman, whose first wife had died in the national palace while he was President. He fell in love with the fair young daughter of his old political foe. Don Romero Rubio at first frowned upon the suit of the hero. A



*C. B. Waite, Photo., Mexico City.*

MADAME DIAZ.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### RETURN TO THE PRESIDENCY—SAVING MEXICO FROM BANKRUPTCY

No one can form even an approximate idea of President Diaz's wonderful work as an administrative and constructive statesman without knowing something of the ruin which the administration of President Gonzalez brought upon Mexico between 1880 and 1884.

In the period represented by the Juarez and Lerdo governments, when the Mexican theorists plucked so eloquently the harp strings of imaginative democracy, the Mexican financial crisis was so grave, the country so exhausted, and the credit of the republic so low, that warrants on the national treasury for the salaries of government employees were bought in the capital of Mexico itself for ten cents on the dollar, and government bonds, issued at absolutely ruinous rates of interest, were with great difficulty sold in London and other great financial centers at fifty cents on the dollar. Before Diaz first assumed power, the unpaid salaries and wages due to government officials and employees alone amounted to more than \$40,000,000. Some employees had not been paid for two years.

In spite of this terrible condition of things, President Diaz, in his first term of office, managed to revive the credit of the country, and all persons in public employ-

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ment, whether in the army or civil service, received ~~their~~ incomes on time.

But while Gonzalez sat in the national palace, although he was able to hold Mexico together as a nation and prevent any relapse into armed conflict, Mexico was plundered and wrecked by stupidity and corruption. Money was spent with almost insane extravagance. Vast subsidies were voted to railways and other enterprises, millions piled on millions, without the slightest regard to the income of the nation. The government borrowed money from private capitalists, banks, and bankers at almost incredible rates of interest. A broker was kept in the national palace to hawk the government's credit about from door to door. It was a common thing to issue bonds which were received by the government in payment of customs duties. These bonds could only be used in the customhouses by the persons to whom they were issued. A money lender would, in order to get his capital back promptly, have merchandise imported in his name for all the leading importers, and would pay the duties in government bonds; so that the customhouses which received the bonds had no money to pay into the public treasury. By this device the usurers could get ten or twelve per cent in interest for their money from the government and immediately get their capital back.

President Gonzalez's friends and advisers not only connived at this method of draining the nation of its wealth—while corruption and blackmail spread into the remotest parts of the public service, and what were at first legitimate enterprises were converted into gambling adventures—but a government ring, which was privately interested in the production of nickel and had practically secured control of the supply of that metal, introduced

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subsidiary nickel coins into the national currency. No limit was placed upon the legal-tender quality of these coins. They were issued from the public treasury at one standard of value and were receivable in the customhouses at a rate forty per cent higher. Under this extraordinary arrangement \$100,000 in nickel coins could be obtained from the treasury for \$60,000 in silver and taken to the customhouse at Vera Cruz, where the nickel coins would be accepted as \$100,000, leaving a profit of \$40,000 in twenty-four hours on an investment of \$60,000. Immense quantities of nickel currency traveled back and forward between the treasury and the customhouses, and the nation was robbed royally. The palpable corruption involved in the nickel currency stirred the people of the capital to rioting.

The Gonzalez administration also provoked violent public demonstrations, bordering on attempts at insurrection, by its proposal to recognize the old English public debt at a time when the nation had been stripped of its resources and was groaning under the weight of its bankruptcy. At the close of President Gonzalez's term of office the condition of the national finances was almost indescribable.

When Porfirio Diaz was called again to the presidency the country was so sunk in debt and its sources of income so mortgaged that the government was in a state of paralysis. The customhouses of Tampico and Matamoras had mortgages covering a fraction under ninety-nine per cent of their receipts. The customhouse of Vera Cruz had mortgages covering nearly eighty-eight per cent of its total income; the receipts of the customhouses at Laredo, Mier, and Camargo were mortgaged to exactly the same extent. Other customhouses were mortgaged to the amount of eighty-seven and a third

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per cent of their receipts. Not only that, but what income remained in the Vera Cruz customhouse was drawn upon to pay \$1,000 daily to one private creditor and \$20,000 a week to another.

The whole income of the general tax office of the Federal District was applied to the service of a thirty-million-dollar loan made by the National Bank. The general income office of the Federal District was mortgaged to the extent of \$2,000 a day to the National Bank on account of another loan, which also absorbed the entire net profits of the National Lottery.

The national mints were mortgaged for the sum of \$2,384,568.67.

There was a mortgage on the national palace and on Chapultepec Castle, the summer residence of the President. So thoroughly had the nation been gutted that in order to secure a loan of \$880,000 from the Mortgage Bank, President Gonzalez had actually permitted a mortgage to be placed on the following national properties: the barracks at Peralvillo; the barracks of Invalidos, at Santa Teresa; the barracks at San Ildefonso; the School of Arts and Trades for Men; the Encarnation National School for Girls; the School of Fine Arts; the customhouse of Santo Domingo; the Hospital of Terceros; the San Martin Railway; the Astronomical Observatory; the Ascension Hacienda; the San Jacinto Hacienda, and the Agricultural School.

So immense and undisguisable was the bankruptcy of Mexico that more than one half of the whole Federal income was mortgaged in advance. Out of \$17,406,700.53 received at the customhouses in that year, \$13,848,160.30 belonged to the government's creditors, leaving only \$3,558,540.23 free for the national treasury. Besides this, the receipts had diminished

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to the amount of \$6,000,000 from those of the year before.

It was impossible for a government to exist much longer under such conditions. The nation's credit was gone. It had to sell bonds at such rates, pay such premiums, and endow its securities with such amazing privilege at the customhouses, that not more than one half of the face value of bonds were received in cash. A private merchant could borrow money on his note three or four times cheaper than the nation. Ordinary and extraordinary means of income were practically exhausted. The receipts of the national treasury for the approaching year could by no means exceed \$4,000,000, while the government budget showed an estimated expenditure of \$40,000,000, to say nothing of a deficit of \$26,588,615.79 standing over from the previous year.

So daring were the methods employed to wreck the finances of the nation that the money lenders even induced the government not only to pay principal and interest on outrageous loans and to mortgage the public buildings, but also to subject itself to heavy fines when the interest was not paid on time. When Diaz became President again, he ordered the Secretary of Finance to take \$1,000 a day from the internal taxes and pay it into the Mortgage Bank, to be applied to the public debt. After four months he asked the Secretary how much of the debt had been paid off. That official replied that not a dollar of principal or interest had been satisfied, as all the money had gone into penalties for overdue payments. Diaz then ordered that in future not a dollar of the penalties should be paid, and that only principal and interest should be recognized. Thereat the president of the Mortgage Bank went to him and indignantly called his attention to the law authorizing credit-

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ors to fine the government. Diaz answered that it was a vicious law, which he could not observe, and that he would induce the Congress to change it. This he did at once, and not another dollar of penalty money was wrung from the treasury by the extortionists.

From all parts of the country there went up a cry for the return of Porfirio Diaz to power. Not only were all classes beginning to feel the effects of extravagance and spoliation; not only was the name of Mexico again becoming a hissing and a byword abroad, but the very life of the republic seemed to be menaced.

It was the havoc wrought by the Gonzalez administration, its bankruptcy of the nation, its corruption of the public attitude toward public debts—a corruption so profound that the mere proposal to recognize the English debt provoked riots—although it was generally believed that Gonzalez and his friends would have made millions of dollars themselves out of the transaction—that fixed the resolution of Diaz to again become President of Mexico; and it was the memory of this financial chaos and bankruptcy, the memory of times when neither the army nor the civil employees of the government were regularly paid for their services, and when the newspapers would announce at irregular intervals that on such and such a day the public employees would receive a portion of the money due to them—it was this stark memory that made the country resolve not to let Diaz retire even after he had restored the public credit and made the nation solvent again.

With an empty treasury and with the money lenders draining the country dry of its revenues, even the judges in the country began to sell justice in the courts in order to support themselves. One judge in the capital, who had made a peculiarly atrocious decision, was stopped



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in the street by friends of the victim of his judgment, who loudly accused him of having accepted bribes from the successful litigant. The judge placed his hand over his heart and naïvely declared that his conscience was free on that score, because he had been careful to accept money from both sides.

Things grew worse and worse, and the cry for the return of Díaz could not be silenced. In 1884 he was once more elected President, taking possession of his office on December 1st of that year. The demand for his services may be judged by the fact that, although he was a private citizen when elected, he received 15,969 out of the 16,462 electoral votes cast.

Then began the long stretch of sane and constructive government which won from President Roosevelt's pen the declaration that "President Díaz is the greatest statesman now living," and inspired Elihu Root, the conservative and reticent Secretary of State, to say in a public speech: "I look to Porfirio Díaz, the President of Mexico, as one of the great men to be held up for the hero worship of mankind."

President Díaz has remained in power continuously for twenty-six years, in addition to his first term of four years, and he has just been reëlected for six years more; so that, if he should live out his new term of office, he will have served as President of the Mexican Republic for thirty-six years.

Almost the first act of Díaz, on returning to the presidency in 1884, was to have his own salary cut down from \$30,000 to \$15,000. As a soldier he never asked his men to go where he would not lead; so, now, in dealing with an imperious necessity for retrenchment, he first reduced his own income by one half before asking the other officials and employees to suffer a diminution of

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their pay. Then he made a general reduction of salaries which saved \$2,221,545 a year. In addition to this, he enforced economies in all branches of the government, and held his subordinates strictly in the collection of the nation's revenues. As a further sign of his attitude he refused to live in the national palace, and made his residence in a modest private house close by.

With his mind set on restoring the national credit, the President grappled heroically with the neglected debts of the country. The floating debt of \$25,000,000—which consisted mainly of unpaid salaries and wages in the military service and civil list, overdue subsidies to small railways, pay warrants on the treasury, and short-time loans—was converted into a scheme of annual payments of \$1,943,275 during twenty-five years, which was equivalent to raising a cash loan of \$25,000,000 at six per cent.

The mighty foreign debt claims of \$227,413,220 were consolidated and recognized. The total sum was adjusted to \$147,274,000, a saving of \$80,139,220. So great was the confidence inspired by the President's straightforward measures to satisfy the obligations contracted by the country, that the foreign creditors cheerfully accepted Mexican bonds, and even conceded the right of Mexico to redeem the bonds at forty per cent of their face value. The ultimate result of this intelligent, energetic, and courageous policy was that the nation was able, with the hearty consent of its creditors, to extinguish a nominal debt of \$227,413,220 with \$58,909,600.

It will be seen that, quite aside from the satisfactory and economical arrangement of the \$25,000,000 of pressing floating debt, the manifest honesty and strength of Mexico under the rule of Diaz enabled the government

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not only to save \$168,503,620 in the settlement of its foreign debt, but also to give Mexican securities a serious place in the money markets of the world; and it was this splendid proof of the republic's purpose to turn from extravagance and bankruptcy and pay her debts at home and abroad that enabled Mexico, in 1888, four years after the financial chaos in which her revenues and public buildings were mortgaged, her treasury empty, and her credit dead, to raise a cash loan of \$105,000,000, at six per cent interest, from the great German banking house of Bleichroeder.

When President Barrios, of Guatemala, attempted to make himself dictator of the five Central American republics, President Diaz protested against the principle of conquest being introduced among the peoples of America, and kept a Mexican army of 18,000 men on the Guatemalan frontier until the death of Barrios, in 1885, on the battlefield of Chalchuapa, in Salvador, ended that adventurer's intolerable enterprise.

An attempt was made in the Mexican Congress to bring Gonzalez to trial and punishment for his misdeeds in office, and among the deputies who pressed for this action was Don José Yves Limantour, now the great Secretary of Finance of Mexico, whose services to his country rank second only to those of President Diaz, and whose fame as a practical statesman, political economist, and financier is known in all countries. President Diaz did not encourage this movement against Gonzalez, because it seemed to him unwise at that critical time to stir up discord, especially in the army, where Gonzalez had a large following. He sacrificed all side issues to his great design of preserving the peace and lifting up the national credit.

As President Diaz's second term of office drew to its

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close, Mexico's financial standing all over the world stood high, and her domestic affairs were in a flourishing condition. Public officials and employees were paid promptly and all government obligations were discharged on time. The work of building railways, telegraph lines, and other public improvements was pushed forward vigorously. Foreign capital began to flow into the country. A multitude of public schools were opened and education was made compulsory.

With the recollection of Gonzalez's shameful and disastrous administration in mind, it seemed little short of national insanity to think of allowing Diaz to retire from office. Yet the Constitution forbade a president to succeed himself. While the call for Diaz's continuation in power grew louder and more general—the very suggestion that he might not stay in office was a menace to Mexican credit—his father-in-law, Don Manuel Romero Rubio, quietly started a movement in the Congress which resulted in an amendment to the Constitution permitting the President to serve for two consecutive terms. Before his third term had expired the Constitution was again changed, so that the President might serve as often as the people chose to elect him.

In Diaz's first term of office there was a vague conspiracy against the government between certain ambitious generals and the President of the Supreme Court, who was the constitutional successor to the President. This plot never got beyond the initial stage. Yet it suggested a grave danger. In order to lessen this danger, President Gonzalez had, by an executive order and without the slightest legal authority, changed the term of office of the President of the Supreme Court from six years to one year, provided that he should be chosen by the court from its own body, and also that he could

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not be elected to succeed himself immediately. This arbitrary act, which prevented any person in direct succession to the presidency from being in office long enough to conspire, was afterwards legalized, and the system stood substantially so until congressional officers were named for the presidential succession, and, later on, the office of Vice President was created.

The subsequent reelection of President Diaz for four-year terms in 1892, in 1896, and in 1900, and his reelection for six-year terms in 1894 and 1910, are the result of a national determination to continue his great policy of peace and progress as long as he can be persuaded to serve.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### WONDERFUL RESULTS OF DIAZ'S RULE

It is not possible to tell in narrative form the story of President Diaz's steady and peaceful work of construction and regeneration in Mexico. Such a gigantic achievement can only be expressed by a statement of results. The tranquil, united, and flourishing Mexico of to-day, contrasted with the divided, blood-stained, lawless, and bankrupt Mexico when President Diaz first assumed power, furnishes the best answer that can be made to the ignorant slanderers, blackmailers, and would-be revolutionists who, safely sheltered in foreign lands, have sought to befoul the name of their own country.

Side by side with the President stands Don José Yves Limantour, the great Secretary of Finance, who shares with him the honor of many of Mexico's greatest modern achievements. This brilliant statesman, whose profound knowledge of finance and business generally and whose honesty, vigilance, and energy have played such a wonderful part in the material uplift of the nation, was already a man of great wealth when President Diaz drew him into his Cabinet in 1893. Since then his services to Mexico have made him known in all countries.

In the first year of Diaz's presidency, 1877-78, the whole national income of Mexico was only \$19,776,638.

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By 1908-9 it was almost \$100,000,000. Two years before that it had reached the enormous aggregate of \$114,286,122. In other words, the peaceful and progressive conditions secured by the strength and intelligence of the national administration multiplied the government's revenues more than five times.

In spite of this financial abundance, Mexican affairs were managed with such frugality and consummate ability that the combined surpluses of income over expenditure accumulated during that period amounted to more than \$136,000,000. President Diaz found his country in an abyss of poverty and debt. Before the end of his seventh term of office he had saved up \$136,000,000. Of this huge surplus, about \$61,000,000 was spent on large constructive works of public improvement and the remaining \$75,000,000 was retained in the treasury as a cash balance.

When Diaz first took control of Mexico, imaginative democracy had brought the country to such a pass that Mexican bonds bearing ten and twelve per cent interest could be bought in London for ten cents on the dollar. To-day Mexican four-per-cent bonds sell at ninety-seven cents on the dollar; which means that Mexico's credit is so good that her government can borrow money at a slight fraction more than four per cent interest. Mexico can borrow in any of the world's money markets at a lower rate of interest than Russia, Portugal, Greece, and many other old nations.

Counting the rate at which bonds were sold before Diaz became President, together with the enormous premiums, rates of interest, and customhouse privileges, it is certain that, under Juarez and Lerdo, Mexico sometimes paid a thousand per cent for the use of cash. Think of it—a thousand per cent! Contrast that with

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the Mexico which has saved \$136,000,000 over her regular expenses in thirty years of intelligent government; has spent \$61,000,000 in harbors and other permanent works, and now, with a cash surplus of \$75,000,000 in her treasury, can raise all the money she needs at practically four per cent interest, and it will be possible to measure one angle at least of what Diaz has meant and still means to his country.

No figures showing the foreign trade of Mexico when Diaz first came into power in 1876 are obtainable. But a statement of that commerce in the year when he succeeded to the wreck and shame of Gonzalez's administration, compared with conditions to-day, illustrates the difference between sentimental or technical theories of government and actual government itself. Here are the figures.

	1884-85		1884-85
Imports.	\$23,786,684.90	Exports.	\$46,670,845.00
	1909-10		1909-10
Imports..	\$194,854,547.00	Exports..	\$260,056,228.03

Each of these lines represents the whole foreign commerce of Mexico for a fiscal year. Twenty-six years of progressive government lie between the figures.

At the beginning of Diaz's service in 1876 the national government had only fifty-one poor wagon roads connecting the capital with the states of the republic, with a total length of 3,728 miles. In that same year the whole railway mileage of the republic together was only 407 miles.

After thirty years of Diaz's energetic and far-sighted statesmanship Mexico finds herself served in 1910 by 15,000 miles of railways, including the splendid Tehuantepec National Railway, reaching from ocean



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to ocean, a formidable competitor to the Panama Canal.

This vast system of transportation is the result of a generous and continuous policy of encouragement and protection to both foreign and native capital. It is estimated that more than \$1,300,000,000 has been invested in Mexican railways. Of this immense sum perhaps one half represents the enterprise of citizens of the United States. These figures, as all financial statements throughout this book, represent Mexican currency, not gold. It is interesting to set this result of Diaz's railway policy in direct contrast:

1876		1910
407 miles of railways		15,000 miles of railways

In addition to this, several thousand miles of new rails have already been planned in Mexico, and when the work is finished it will be possible to go by rail from Sonora, or the banks of the Rio Grande, to the frontier of Guatemala and beyond, or to Campeche and Yucatan.

The total value of the railways in Mexico to-day is estimated at \$1,324,272,621. There are 124 lines, carrying in 1909 85,652,756 passengers, 9,756,869,153 tons of freight, and producing aggregate receipts of \$61,187,794, as against \$2,564,890 in 1876.

Aside from other considerations, the mere police power of this mighty system of railways—the direct result of Diaz's ideas and influence—is worth all it cost, as a protection in the present and a guaranty for the future.

When Diaz first became President the total length of the telegraph lines in Mexico was 4,420 miles. In 1909 the telegraph and telephone lines of the republic had

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increased to nearly 20,000,000 miles, to say nothing of the government's wireless telegraph systems, submarine cables, and subriver cables.

In 1876 the Mexican postal service carried only 4,709,750 pieces of mail, at a cost of \$424,708. In 1909 the movement of mail matter through the Mexican post offices amounted to 191,744,916 pieces, producing a revenue of \$4,316,848 and costing \$5,018,823.

Statistics may sometimes be tiresome; nevertheless, even the dullest mind can catch the meaning of an increased postal service in the daily lives of a people, and the figures show that the Mexican mails carry forty times as many letters and packages as when Diaz began his first administration.

In spite of the fame of Mexico as a land of mineral wealth, when Diaz took direction of the government the annual production of silver and gold was only \$26,310,815.34. In those days the control of mining was in the hands of the states, and investors and operators found conditions confusing and unreliable. Under Diaz the whole question of mining rights was nationalized, made uniform, and taken out of the perplexities and corruptions of merely local control. A mining concession in Mexico became as secure as a mining right in the United States. The strength of the government, and its reasonable and generous dealing with investors, had a powerful effect in stimulating this important source of wealth, and by 1908 the yearly production of silver and gold alone reached the enormous sum of \$125,894,089.33. In 1909 there were 31,988 mining properties of all kinds in the republic, covering a billion acres and producing an annual yield of \$160,232,876.08.

During the Diaz administration the coasts and harbors of the country have been greatly improved. The

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most elaborate works have been constructed in the ports of Tampico, Vera Cruz, Coatzacoalcas, Manzanillo, and Salina Cruz. The government has spent \$120,000,000 on these extensive improvements.

Since 1897 Mexico has served her coasts with 34 lighthouses, 39 fanals, 23 floats, and 65 buoys, at a cost of \$7,000,000.

There was practically no manufacturing industry in the country when Diaz's army turned Lerdo out of power. To-day the 146 cotton mills of Mexico alone produce \$43,370,012.05 of fabrics and employ 32,229 persons; the 437 tobacco factories produce 505,437,551 packages of cigarettes, 81,336,415 cigars, and about 170,000 pounds of pipe tobacco; and the sugar refineries yield about 127,000 tons of refined sugar—to say nothing of the jute and silk industries, the woolen mills, iron works, smelters, paper mills, soap factories, breweries, meat-packing works, and other manufacturing establishments.

The immensity of the commercial progress and stability wrought out under President Diaz could be proved by the banking system, if there were no other way of getting at an approximate measurement of improvement. In the old days the Church was the one great money lender, and in all fairness it must be said that the ecclesiastical funds were loaned at an almost unvarying rate of about five per cent. But when Juarez swept away the power and wealth of the Church, the business men of the country were practically without organized and responsible means of credit or exchange.

In 1881 ~~there was only one bank in Mexico, the Bank of London, Mexico, and South America, with a capital of \$500,000 and \$2,000,000 of assets. This was~~ a branch of an English institution. In that year Don

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Enrique Creel, now the distinguished Mexican Secretary of Foreign Relations, started the Banca Minera in Chihuahua. His father-in-law, General Terrazas, was interested in two other local banks. In time these three banks were merged together as the Banca Minera.

It is hard to convey an adequate idea of the difficulty of starting up or carrying on business in such a bankless country, where standards of credit, interest, and exchange changed from day to day, sometimes from hour to hour.

Señor Creel's bank received a perpetual charter from the state of Chihuahua; but in 1882 President Gonzalez—who ultimately brought the nation to wreck and bankruptcy—caused the Mexican National Bank to be established in the City of Mexico with French funds. Its capital stock was \$8,000,000, of which one half was paid up. This bank, in which President Gonzalez himself had stock, was intended to monopolize the banking of the nation. Señor Creel undertook to fight the monopoly, and quietly encouraged others to start banks in various states, on the theory that the right to charter banks was one of the powers of the states. After a while Señor Creel and his father-in-law went to Mexico City, and a compromise was agreed upon with President Gonzalez, under which the perpetual charter granted by the state of Chihuahua to the Banca Minera was replaced by a national franchise limited to fifteen years, although Gonzalez's own bank had a charter for thirty years.

It is twenty-nine years since the whole Mexican nation had only one bank, and that a foreign bank, with a capital of \$500,000 and assets of \$2,000,000; and in that short period the country has developed thirty-two national banks which, even in 1907, had an aggregate

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capitalization of \$173,600,000, with reserve funds of \$51,898,861.43 and assets amounting in all to \$764,001,986.40.

The part played by Señor Limantour, the Secretary of Finance, in developing and guiding this extraordinary result can hardly be expressed in words. The most striking thing about it is that none of these banks has ever failed, nor has there ever been a complete suspension of a Mexican national bank.

The Law itself intelligently analyzes the differing functions of the banking system by dividing it into banks of issue, mortgage banks, and banks for promotion and encouragement. There is now a bank created for the purpose of aiding agriculture and irrigation works, with an original capital of \$10,000,000, in addition to funds procured by \$50,000,000 of bonds guaranteed by the nation; and the government has also set aside \$25,000,000 for subsidies to irrigation enterprises and long-time loans to agriculturalists.

It would take a separate volume to merely catalogue the evidences of Mexico's rise to wealth and power under the leadership of President Diaz and the statesmen he has drawn to his support and service.

In the matter of education the republic has made much progress in spite of the indifference of the mass of the Indian population. In 1877 there were in the 4,715 public schools of Mexico only 164,699 pupils, with 4,428 teachers. This covered the whole republic, including the states. The funds devoted to public instruction then did not exceed \$2,049,045.

The revolution wrought in this direction is indicated by the fact that there were, in 1909, 12,599 schools, with 778,000 pupils, under 15,000 professors and teachers, at an annual cost of \$7,000,000.

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It is doubtful whether more than ten per cent of the whole Mexican population could read and write when Diaz first became President. To-day probably one third of the inhabitants of the country and one half of the inhabitants of the Federal District can read and write. All this in addition to numerous colleges and professional schools, not to count the libraries and museums.

The pomp and grace of the old Spanish aristocracy have vanished; the glory, mystery, and power of the privileged Church have disappeared; the dashing, jingling whiskerandos of the revolutions have gone; the picturesque excitements of brigandage, kidnaping, and rioting are no more; and the thrill of bankruptcy no longer adds its touch of tragedy to general ignorance and demoralization. Mexico has become a peaceful, prosperous, debt-paying country. Yet there is still to be found in the wild grandeur of her scenery, the romance of her ancient ruins, the picturesque and quaint characteristics of her lovable people, the indescribable interest of her cities and villages, and the almost staggering richness of her unplowed and undigged wealth—there is to be found in these and other things a charm not easily to be felt elsewhere in the world. But that which takes hold of the deeper imagination is the sight of a nationality rising bravely and steadily out of the ashes of the past.

A few grieve for the passing of the old days of democratic theories and endless fighting in Mexico, but enlightened and sensible men who understand the characteristics and needs of the Mexican people fully recognize how unanswerably the strong, and sometimes harsh, rule of President Diaz has justified itself; and there never was a truer saying than that "consequences are unpitying."

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In examining the proofs of Mexican development it is necessary to keep in mind the foresight of the government in guarding against evils which have come upon other countries in the rush of material success.

Señor Limantour was in control of the national finances when, in the fiscal year 1895-96, the income of the nation first showed an actual surplus over the expenditure. It was he, too, who, in 1896, with the powerful support of President Diaz, succeeded finally in abolishing the *alcabalas*, or inland customhouses, which weighed so cruelly upon commerce between the states and repressed the internal development of the nation. That achievement went well with the system of national banks which made banking free in Mexico. The *alcabala* methods had been maintained for centuries.

Señor Limantour also worked out the admirable scheme through which Mexico put herself upon an equal plane with other commercial nations by changing from the silver to the gold standard of money values. This was done in the face of furious opposition from the vast silver mine interests. Before the gold standard was adopted the Mexican mints were exporting to Asia from \$40,000,000 to \$45,000,000 of new silver dollars annually. But the fluctuations in values destroyed Mexican commerce on a large scale. An article worth \$1 twenty-five years before was now worth \$2.60. It was impossible to make accurate budget estimates. The variation in values actually made a difference of thirty-five per cent in some years in the interest on the foreign debt, and the same confusion showed itself in the payment of interest and dividends on railway and other investments. The outcry of the silver men was so great when the government proposed the gold standard that it seemed as if all foreign capital would be withdrawn from Mexican mines.

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Notwithstanding this, the gold standard was adopted, and Mexico ceased to be a byword in the financial markets of civilization.

In this, as in other things, President Diaz governed his country according to facts and not according to theories, always looking to the future as well as the present.

One of the most remarkable acts of original and courageous statesmanship in the administration of President Diaz is represented by the great railway merger through which the Mexican Government has protected the Mexican nation against the perils of a railway trust or monopoly such as at one time seemed to threaten even the highly developed, experienced, and hard-headed people of the United States.

As the development of railways in Mexico began to approach the present proportions of 15,000 miles, the Diaz administration, always on the alert against influences tending to overshadow or lessen the control of Mexicans in their own affairs, became aware of the fact that one of the mightiest railway systems in the United States—a system that had swallowed up one railway after another, until its power in business and politics in the United States was a subject of widespread protest and governmental investigation—was attempting to buy control of the Mexican Central Railway, which was financially embarrassed and likely to be unable to pay the interest on its bonds.

There could be no doubt that this would be the first step in the economic conquest of Mexico by foreigners, a conquest that must eventually invade the domestic politics, and ultimately the government, of the republic. With the great trunk lines in the hands of foreign corporations, and the connecting railways at the mercy of



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the central monopoly, the industry and agriculture of Mexico would be in the grip of aliens. Already, in 1903, the government had prevented a merger of the Mexican National and the Mexican Central lines by buying the stock control of the Mexican National. But in 1906 the signs of a proposed conquest of Mexico through a giant railway monopoly were again formidable. As Mr. Limantour said to the Mexican Congress:

“In the event of our railways being absorbed by more powerful systems beyond our borders, and being operated like those systems by companies organized under foreign laws, and from which every Mexican element had been excluded, could any clause that might be inserted in a concession prevent our country from being exploited as a sort of tributary territory or keep those colossal corporations themselves from a more or less thinly veiled intervention in the economic and political life of the nation?”

With the hearty approval of President Diaz, Mr. Limantour, supported by the Congress, prepared a plan through which the nation might be saved from the threatened foreign railway despotism and Mexico kept open and free for both native and foreign investors in agriculture, mining, and manufactures; for it was clear that if a railway trust could hamper and frighten a nation with such courage, energy, and individual powers of resistance as the people of the United States, the engulfing and controlling force of such a combination would be all the more terrible in a partly developed, languid, and easy-going people like the Mexicans.

The result of Mr. Limantour's labors was a merger of the following lines, with the stock control in the hands of the Mexican Government, thus averting forever any danger of a private railway tyranny in the republic:

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### THE NATIONAL RAILWAYS OF MEXICO

National Railways of Mexico.	6,166.456 miles
Interoceanic Railway of Mexico.	733.837 “
Mexican Southern Railway	292.043 “
Texas-Mexican Railway	161.853 “
Pan-American Railroad	284.276 “
Vera Cruz and Isthmus Railroad.	292.043 “
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Total.	7,930.508 “

In addition to this the government owns the Tehuantepec National Railway Company, whose lines are 207 miles long, with the magnificent modern harbors of Salina Cruz and Puerto Mexico—a direct ocean-to-ocean system that was opened by President Diaz in 1907.

In the attempt to minimize the importance of this courageous and far-seeing achievement of Mexican statesmanship, some of the evil agitators who delight in all that hurts the name of their country have whispered about insinuations that Mr. Limantour “unloaded” his own railway properties into the government combination. The truth is that Mr. Limantour never owned a share of railway stock in his life.

The great Mexican railway merger wonderfully combines government control with private operation. Its authorized capital stock is \$447,492,706.66, and its bonds \$270,907,280. This, with the still outstanding and guaranteed stocks of the National Railroad Company (\$95,480,000) and of the Mexican International (\$20,113,000), brings the total authorized capitalization of the merged lines up to a total of \$833,592,986.66. These figures, of course, all represent Mexican currency. Only a part of the authorized securities has been issued. About \$250,000,000 are held in reserve. Generous provision

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has been made for the extension of the old lines and the acquisition of new lines.

Although the government has a voting control, its fixed policy is not to interfere with railway administration, reserving its power for matters concerning freedom of commerce and the protection and development of the country.

It will be seen that by this intelligent arrangement the large minority, representing private ownership, which actually manages the operation of the 7,930.508 miles of merged lines, prevents the destructive tendencies of absolute government ownership and management which might wreck the system by ignoring commercial considerations and yielding to political favoritism; while the power of the government to intervene protects commerce and the country generally from a greedy policy that would sacrifice everything to an appetite for immediate and enormous profits, considering only the present dividends of the railways and forgetting Mexico as a whole.

Not only has the railway merger warded off a profound national danger, preserved the liberty of commerce, and left Mexican fields of investment more secure than ever, but the lines are managed more economically, the service is better, and the profits are greater than under the old system. The report for June 30, 1910, shows total gross earnings of \$31,593,557.78 and net earnings of \$20,968,735.61. This is immensely better than when the roads were owned separately; nor has commerce been compelled to bear the burden of the admirable result. Besides, the lines are now secure against bankruptcy, and instead of the two-per-cent dividends which were guaranteed on the first preferred stock from the earnings of the year ending June 30, 1910, the company has for two years actually paid four per cent.

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It was thought that the drainage of the Valley of Mexico, at a cost of \$15,967,778; the paving, sanitation, and beautification of the capital, and the construction of the Tehuantepec railway, with its two terminal ports, marked high water in the tide of improvements achieved by Mexico under the rule of President Diaz; but the railway merger surpasses all other events in far-reaching importance since he first extinguished revolutions and brigandage, met the national debts on time, and gave the signal for the general railway development of the country.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### THE REAL MEXICAN PROBLEM

FOR thirty years President Diaz has governed Mexico with the power of an autocrat. No monarch in the world has been able to exercise such authority over a people. So much have Mexicans fallen into the habit of relying upon his judgment and carrying out his wishes that he can name the governors of the twenty-seven states, the members of the Congress, the judges of the courts. All things in the life of the nation fall into order and move according to his will, following, of course, the main purposes and general lines rather than the strict letter of the Constitution.

After thirty years of almost absolute power, his whole fortune consists of about \$200,000 and the house he occupies in Mexico City. He also owns \$17,000 of Mexican bonds, given to him for military service; but these he has turned over to his wife, being unwilling to present them for payment while he is President of Mexico.

With 30,000 soldiers and a few thousand *rurales* he has been able to maintain peace, and make life and property almost as safe in the Mexican republic as they are in France, England, or Germany; and the population has increased to about 16,000,000 persons.

Beneath the national government are the 27 state governors, with their 295 political chiefs, or *jefes politicos*, 1,798 municipal presidents, and 4,574 justices

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of the peace, or *comisarios*. These, with the governor of the Federal District, represent the executive instrumentalities of the nation.

No one has understood better than President Diaz the futility of attempting to deal with his people as though they were Anglo-Saxons developed by ancestry, tradition, racial instinct, education, and habit to sustain the individual burdens and responsibilities of citizenship contemplated by their Anglo-Saxon Constitution. The truth is, that probably not more than one tenth of the population of Mexico ever casts a vote at an election. Nevertheless, ~~the Constitution endows every male adult~~ with the right to vote. This condition of things is largely due to the natural laziness and political indifference of the Indians and part Indians who constitute more than three quarters of the whole citizenship of the country. It is also partly the result of a general feeling among the masses, either that things are bound to go on well under the direction of President Diaz, or that it would be worse than useless to attempt to oppose anything he favored.

There is no gentler, no more polite and lovable people in the world than the great body of the Mexicans. Nor is there any country in which the domestic affections show more tenderly, even among the poorest and most ignorant. The Indian blood flowers constantly in the professions, and among the descendants of the ancient races are to be found brilliant lawyers, physicians, engineers, and other men of training and culture. Skilled labor has begun to organize itself. A deep bond of sympathy and historical consciousness unites the traditionally exclusive members of fashionable society with the most wretched and degraded peons—a spirit quite patriarchal, but none the less genuine. Yet, unfortunate-

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ly, the average Mexican is imbued with a sort of political fatalism, a feeling that somehow the government will go on by itself; and President Diaz has constantly complained that his countrymen, as a whole, do not take a sufficient and rational interest in politics. He has an inextinguishable faith in the future of his people, and is intensely proud of their amiability and talents, but frankly acknowledges their present political shallowness.

To get at the heart of Mexican politics and government, one must always remember that the great majority of the inhabitants are probably derived from Oriental races, and then hark back over the track of less than four centuries to the time when their ancestors were idol-worshipping subjects of kings, warriors, and priests, given over to cannibalism. They had temples, palaces, fortresses, laws, arts, and a distinct civilization many centuries before the armed Spaniards burst in upon them from the sea, but there was no trace of democratic aspirations, instincts, or capacities among them, either then or in the agonizing centuries of Spanish misgovernment and oppression.

For more than half a century the Mexican people, particularly the Indians and hybrids, gave thrilling proof of their willingness and ability to fight and die for independence. However, history is full of instances showing that peoples will fight for collective, or national, independence who care little or nothing about the political sovereignty of the individual, which is the main burden of political philosophy in Anglo-Saxon countries.

It is the practice of those who criticise or attack the government of Mexico to compare political conditions in that country with political conditions in the United States, simply because the two nations are geographical neighbors, and because their written constitutions are alike in

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essentials. It would be more to the point, and in accord with facts and common sense, to compare political conditions in Mexico with political conditions in the other so-called Latin-American republics.

There are some races to whom absolute democracy is like sunlight, bringing out clearly the hard realities of life, and revealing in all their naked difficulties the problems of society as a whole in their relation to the individual. In such races the tendency of the citizen is not merely to insist upon his personal privileges, but to show a jealous regard for his duty to take upon himself, in his own private station, a full share of the stress, strain, and pain of government.

There are other races to whom democracy is like moonlight, throwing romantic half-lights; giving an air of solemn beauty and dignity to the ugly and the evil alike with the fair and the good; revealing the imaginative and sentimental, but concealing the practical. In such races democracy becomes a vague sentiment, and the individual who looks to the government for all things, rejecting or ignoring his own responsibilities in maintaining order and promoting the general welfare—proclaiming his rights but forgetting his duties, and ignorant of the fact that the process of government begins with personal self-restraint—is apt to regard armed rioting against temporary or individual discomforts or disadvantages as equally justifiable with war deliberately undertaken against unjust and intolerable government.

The Mexican people have not yet had a fair chance to show their possibilities under complete conditions of democratic liberty. That is yet to come. Meanwhile the work of moral, economic, social, and political preparation, for the lack of which all previous democratic experiments have broken down, has been going forward



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under the supervision and direction of President Diaz and his associates; and the elements of stability and conservatism already developed by continuous peace, industry, and education furnish a strong promise for the future, when the venerable master of Mexico shall pass away.

It is said that President Diaz selects the governors of the twenty-seven Mexican states, and that the executive power is so great that state sovereignty is in some respects a theory rather than a fact. In a sense this is true. Such is his influence that he has but to indicate the name of the candidate he approves, and the election becomes a formal ratification of his political judgment.

But state sovereignty in Mexico is of necessity a constitutional fiction. In this, as in other things, many have been led astray by comparisons with the local sovereignties of the United States. The original thirteen American states met as independent nations. Being independent and sovereign, they created a nation with defined and limited sovereign powers, reserving the residuary sovereignty to themselves. In Mexico, however, the national government existed first as the sole and original sovereign, and in the last analysis the states are, in spite of the language of the Constitution, mere subdivisions of the national power for convenience of local administration. Even the electoral system through which the President and Vice President are chosen does not recognize state lines. It must be remembered, too, that the colonies which formed the United States were through all their history separate and wholly independent of each other; and, although they were subject to a common sovereign across the seas, they had different histories, laws, traditions, and habits; so that when they came together as

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free states they were in all respects independent of each other. The Mexican provinces had no such antecedents, but were the merely administrative districts of a single Spanish colony, ruled by a viceroy and a council.

Events and the necessities of the people have made the dominant principle of authority throughout Mexico national and executive rather than federative or legislative. Otherwise the republic might have perished through sheer executive weakness. In the days of Juarez and Lerdo, many of the states disputed the authority of the national government, and it was not until President Diaz broke the power of the various leaders who had attempted to set themselves up as virtual dictators in their own states—such as Canales in Tamaulipas, Pesqueira in Sonora, Alvarez in Guerrero, Trevino in Nuevo Leon, Terresas in Chihuahua, and Traconis in Yucatan—that the national life of Mexico became possible.

“The principle of national authority justifies itself more and more in Mexico,” says President Diaz. “If it is so hard to find one man to direct the Federal government, how much more difficult must it be to find twenty-seven men to govern the states wisely and in harmony with our interests as a nation.”

It would be preposterous to say that government in Mexico or conditions in Mexico approach perfection. The interminable delays of official processes; the restricted press; the immense land monopolies; the lack of irrigation facilities in agricultural districts; the brutalizing and destructive traffic in *pulque*, one of the most demoralizing intoxicants known; the political character of the administration of justice; the system of debt servitude on farms; the habit of imprisoning citizens for trivial or political causes; the extreme rigor of the

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church laws; the costly and often ornamental improvements in the national capital and other great cities, while the country roads and the small towns and villages are neglected—these are some of the things that must be reformed in the future development of the republic. Whether there can be any reform in the popular habits which support 117 bull rings, 11 lotteries, and 389 pawnshops is a more doubtful question.

There are something like 2,000 military bands which regularly furnish concerts in the parks and plazas of Mexico throughout the year. The time must yet come when the masses of the people will be less satisfied with music supplied at the public expense than with clean streets, modern sewerage, and more schools.

One hears bitter complaint of the *jefes politicos*, or political chiefs. There are 295 of them in the republic. These officers represent the power of the state in their districts, and completely overshadow the local authorities. Yet it is difficult to see how the essentials of the system can be abolished. The *jefe politico* is practically the modern counterpart of the *cacique* of the ancient Mexicans, from an administrative standpoint. The Spaniards destroyed the *cacique*, but they had to invent the *jefe politico*. He is, or is intended to be, the official corrective of local sloth and carelessness; but when he is incompetent, corrupt, or tyrannous, he has amazing powers of irritation.

However, the history of the Mexican people under President Diaz is an unbroken record of progress against difficulties that might have crushed a weaker or less devoted man; and the love which his people bear toward him, their recognition of his pure patriotism and wise statesmanship, and their willingness to follow and support him in spite of harshness or errors, are among the

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surest proofs of the growing mental, moral, social, and political steadiness of the Mexican nation as a whole.

A tremendously significant sign of the sober change that has come over the nation is that President Diaz—who knows his country better than anyone else in the world—has been drawing civilians rather than soldiers to his side, statesmen like Mr. Limantour, Mr. Molina, Mr. Creel, and Mr. Corral, who work together in the great design of peace through enlarged industry and prosperity, following out the President's idea that railways, telegraphs, factories, and schools gradually, but surely, take the place of soldiers as peace-makers.

It has been said by one of the most thoughtful and responsible of modern Mexican statesmen that Mexico is like a very long animal, with the head far away from the tail. There is much truth in this idea. The strongly centralized tendencies of the government under President Diaz, having in mind peace, absolute peace, as the one great prerequisite of all other things, have produced a development in the Federal District and in the central states out of all proportion to the state of things in the more remote parts of the republic. Until very recently the guerrilla warfare and fierce brigandage of the Yaqui Indians in Sonora prevented any serious attempt to open up the full resources of that rich state of the Northwest. Even now the treacherous bushwhacking and thuggery of some of the irreconcilable Maya Indians in unsettled parts of the territory of Quintana Roo, 2,000 miles distant from Sonora, discourages enterprise in that fertile extremity of the Southeast.

For a full generation President Diaz has endeavored to end predatory warfare in these two remote regions, only to be disappointed by repeated treacheries and barbarities, and to be compelled again and again to resort

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to military force. Yet the energy of the government in dealing with these incorrigible enemies of progress and development has been cruelly misrepresented.

One of the most atrocious falsehoods spread abroad by the foes of the Mexican Government is the statement that actual human slavery, open and recognized, exists in various parts of the republic, particularly in Yucatan. The author of this book has taken pains to investigate the hideous tales, in which the tortures of the slaves are set forth; the whipping to death of men unwilling or unable to work; the wholesale and undisguised debauchery of their wives and daughters; the misery and horror of servile life on the great henequen, or hemp, plantations; the connivance of the courts and executive officials respecting the vast scene of bondage, brutality, injustice, and even deliberate murder existing before their eyes; and the gross and open immorality of the wealthy ruling families. Many weeks were spent in Yucatan, both with the planters themselves and among the workers in the fields, both Mayas and Yaquis. To test the nature of the work the author actually labored in the fields, cutting henequen with his own hands under the noonday tropical sun, and carrying the heavy bundles of leaves on his back to the appointed places, having a companion keep time with a watch and count the number of leaves cut in a given period by one whose hands and muscles were soft, and who was unaccustomed either to the work or the climate.

The truth is that the sensational writers and their revolutionary accomplices who have thrilled the uninformed American and British peoples with stories of slavery in Yucatan, and have pictured the capture of honest and patriotic Yaqui populations in oppressed Sonora and their deportation to Yucatan, where they were

## THE REAL MEXICAN PROBLEM

sold into slavery, to be worked to death among the trembling and beaten Maya slaves of the country, have mixed up two questions in their desire to wrong the Mexican name, and have invented much of the rest.

The Yaqui trouble is a military question pure and simple, while the so-called debt servitude practiced among the Mayas on the henequen plantations is a feature, not of slavery, but of peonage, the result of patriarchal conditions and habits many centuries old.

It is undeniable that there are many evils attendant on this custom of allowing, or enticing, henequen workers to go heavily in debt to their employers, and that here and there a planter takes advantage of his power and isolated position to be cruel or unjust; yet, taken large and small, the conditions of labor in Yucatan are not much worse than they were in some of the coal fields of Pennsylvania under the old company-store system.

The Yaqui tribes and their allies, who inhabit the southern half of the state of Sonora, along the shores of the Yaqui and Mayo rivers, were never subdued, nor did they submit to the laws and constituted authorities either of the Spanish Government at the time of Spanish dominion or of the Mexican Government afterwards. The armed forces repeatedly sent against them were never able to overcome them decisively. After they were defeated by the expeditions which undertook to pacify them, the various governments always were satisfied with the protestations of peace which the tribes then made and withdrew their troops to other parts where they might be needed.

The Indians remained at peace only for brief spells. There was no force within their territory to inspire them with awe and no authority save that of their chiefs, and they soon returned to the warpath and raided the neigh-

## DIAZ, MASTER OF MEXICO

boring townlets and villages, burning, murdering, and robbing as they proceeded. Then the government was again compelled to take the field against them and keep up the fighting until they sued for peace. The withdrawal of the troops would be followed by a short period of relative quiet, again interrupted by uprisings, incendiarisms, assassinations, and thefts.

The ideal of the Yaquis has been to maintain their absolute independence in a certain territory which they considered as their own. They did not willingly permit the intervention of the national government, nor of the state government, nor submission to any of the laws and regulations obeyed by all other citizens. They insisted upon having their own government, carried on by their chiefs, under their whimsical, unwritten laws, without respect for anything else. For a time the Yaquis and their allies maintained this independent status under the terrible chief Cajeme, who armed and equipped 5,000 men to maintain their independence and fight the Mexican Government to the last extremity. But in time Cajeme's forces were overcome in the field and he was executed for his barbarous crimes.

The Indians along the Mayo River submitted to the government, and the flourishing condition of their region to-day shows how wisely and generously the republic has dealt with them. For a time, too, the Yaquis pretended to submit, and freely accepted the food, clothing, animals, agricultural implements, and seeds distributed among them by the Mexican Government in the hope that they might begin a new life along peaceful, productive lines. Yet, after two years, the Yaquis arose suddenly along the whole river. They attacked the Federal troops, religious orders of both sexes, and slew all the whites they caught, with the exception of the nuns.

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Then ensued another horrible period of savage raiding, after which the Indians were driven to their mountains. The government troops drove them from their strongholds, and for a time there seemed to be peace. Again there was another outburst of massacres and burnings. The Indians no longer fought in large bodies. They sprang forth in small parties all over the state. All travelers were mercilessly butchered. Towns, villages, mines, and lumber camps were forsaken.

In 1906 the situation in Sonora had become intolerable. The development of the great state was impossible while the Yaquis continued to assert their preposterous claim of independence and perpetuate a reign of murder, plunder, and incendiarism. Capital and enterprise stood ready to enter Sonora. All that was needed was peace.

President Diaz was confronted with but two alternatives: either the Yaquis must be exterminated or they must be deported to some other region. All attempts to conciliate the tribe had failed. Thereupon the President had 5,000 or 6,000 Yaquis taken by force to distant Yucatan, where labor was in great demand on the henequen plantations, and where they were distributed as laborers among such planters as would be likely to prevent any of them from returning to Sonora. This stern, but comparatively merciful, policy has practically settled the fearful Yaqui question, and to-day a thousand new forces of productive civilization are at work in Sonora.

In Yucatan the deported Yaquis are really prisoners of war. There is no pretense that they are free. They are not allowed to have arms, nor can they go back to their beloved native state in the Northwest. In all other respects they have the same rights and liberties as the



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natives of Yucatan, and they receive the same pay for the same work.

A careful investigation by the author revealed the fact that the laborers on the henequen plantations seldom, if ever, work more than eight hours a day cutting or cleaning henequen. On some of the plantations it was found that the work in the fields averaged about four hours a day.

There was no sign of fear or enslavement about the workers in the country. They held their heads up, smiled, and looked their employers in the face like any other workmen. Their women and children, almost without exception, wore fine gold chains, some of them displaying jewelry amounting in value to several hundred dollars. They have plenty of arms and ammunition. Six guns were counted in a single cabin. An investigation of the sales made by dealers in arms showed that about 4,000 guns were sold every year to the Indians on the henequen estates, and that, counting the average life of these cheap weapons, there are always 8,000 guns distributed among the Yucatan Indians, to say nothing of the universal machete. It surely needs no argument to convince a fair-minded man that it is impossible to make slaves of an armed people.

There is every evidence that the henequen planters of Yucatan are, as a rule, men of humanity and justice. Most of them supply rent-free houses to their laborers, furnish medical service and medicines without charge, distribute clothing freely, and make generous donations of food. There were many cases found in which planters had spent hundreds of dollars on hospital service for individual laborers or their wives or children. Nor could the most persistent search among the laborers or their families reveal a single instance in which a man was whipped

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for refusing to work. Even the Yaquis, who were secretly questioned, denied any knowledge of the brutalities described by sensational writers; their only complaint being that they were not allowed to return to Sonora.

The statement that actual slavery exists in Yucatan—a charge that cannot be ignored in a biography of Porfirio Diaz—is a falsehood easily disproved by a visit to that wonderful country. The Indian and half-breed population is cleanly and extremely virtuous. It is amazing that anyone should impute immorality to such an admirable people. Nor are there more kindly, hospitable, graceful, and modest women in the world than the wives and daughters of the planters. The attacks upon the homes and social life of the white people of the peninsula are utterly malicious.

One of the greatest statesmen in the republic is Don Olegario Molina, the so-called “henequen king” of Yucatan. After he had organized the henequen industry and, as governor of Yucatan, had turned the city of Merida from a filthy hole, infected with disease, into a beautiful, well-paved, wholesome, modern city, filled with hospitals, asylums, and schools—an absolute miracle in its way—President Diaz, who had gone to Yucatan to personally see the wonderful result, took Señor Molina into his Cabinet as Secretary of the Department of Fomento (promotion and encouragement of public works, agriculture, mining, colonization, etc.). It is this strong-willed man who is safeguarding the water resources of Mexico for irrigation works, the supreme physical need of a more or less rainless country.

After many years of painful and sometimes discouraging effort, the extremities of Mexico—Yucatan and Sonora—are now rivaling the great central states in energy, prosperity, and loyalty.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### WILL THE MEXICAN REPUBLIC STAND?

PRESIDENT DIAZ has planned several times to retire to private life, in order that Mexico might begin to change her presidents peacefully while he was yet alive to support his successors against any attempt to revert to revolution.

At every suggestion that he might withdraw from the presidency he has been overwhelmed with protests and appeals. There can be no doubt that, in spite of his wonderful vigor, increasing age has made it harder to bear the burdens of office, particularly as his authority has become greater and more direct than that of any monarch in the world, and he cannot rid himself of the habit of attending to all important things himself. He has longed to lay down his work and rest. All his associates and intimates know this. Yet the pressure exerted to persuade him to remain at his post of duty—a pressure not only from his own countrymen, but from the friends and connections of Mexico in all countries—has been more than he could resist; and even in his eightieth year he accepted another six-year term of hard service.

More than once the President has had striking evidence of what his retirement to private life would mean to the public credit of his country. In 1901 he suffered from a slight illness, and went to the softer climate of Cuernavaca to recuperate. A prominent banker of Mex-

## WILL THE REPUBLIC STAND?

ico City visited him, and, on returning to the capital, privately caused the newspapers to be informed that Diaz was stricken with a mortal illness and would not recover. This news was cabled to all parts of the world. Instantly the price of Mexican bonds fell in the markets of Europe and America from \$101 to \$78, a loss of \$23. A week later the President returned to the capital in good health and spirits, and when word went forth that he was in no danger of dying, the price of Mexican bonds promptly went back to \$100. Incidents like this, showing what a shock to the public confidence would be involved in his withdrawal from the presidency, have prevailed against Diaz's natural desire to retire from the continuous toil and responsibility of his office. And, even after he had restored peace and the national credit, each time he considered the question of giving up the presidency he found himself confronted with some great work of improvement unfinished: the vast system for the drainage of the Valley of Mexico; the reorganization of the army; the Tehuantepec interoceanic railway; the paving, lighting, and water supply of the capital, and the like; not to mention the revelations of incompetency of those who might be expected to spring into power on his retirement and the obviously corrupt groups eager to turn the government to their personal advantage.

Before the immediate approach of the presidential campaign of 1904, President Diaz announced his intention of retiring to private life, and, with a solemn realization of the great questions of economic development upon which the continued peace and happiness of Mexico must largely depend, he urged Don José Yves Limantour, the distinguished Secretary of Finance, to be his successor, promising to support his candidacy. For the

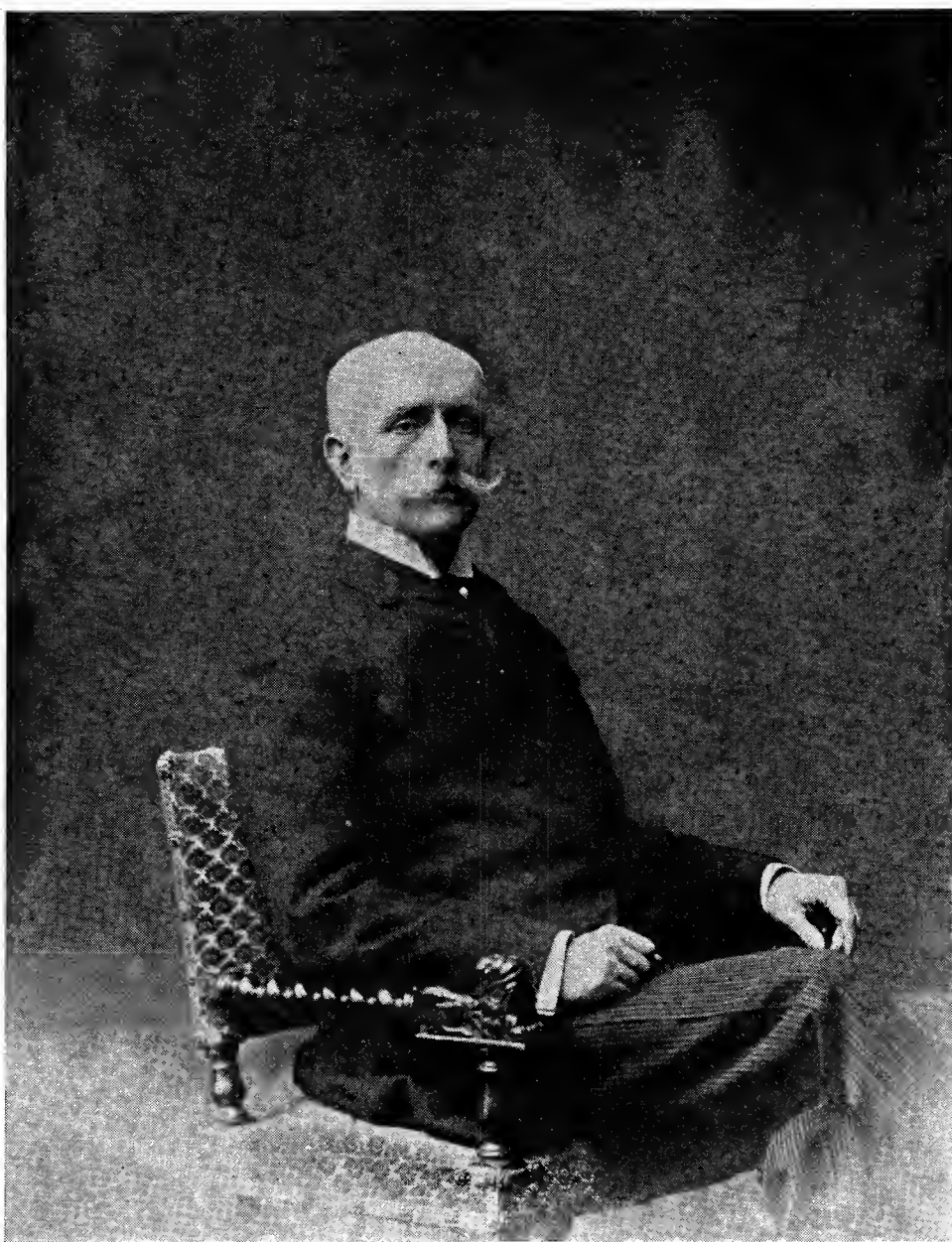
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first time a Vice President was to be elected. Señor Limantour, an administrative statesman of the highest order, was wholly without political ambition. He explained to the President that he did not feel himself to be fitted for political leadership, and particularly insisted that he had no popularity among military men.

The President thereupon called General Bernardo Reyes, a popular officer, to him, and explained the reasons why, in his judgment, Señor Limantour should become President. General Reyes declared that he agreed in the wisdom of selecting the foremost economic thinker and administrator of the republic to guide its policies, and offered to make his qualities and character better understood in the army and to win over the military elements to his support.

General Reyes was then taken into the President's Cabinet as Minister of War. Hardly had he assumed his new duties when mysterious and malicious attacks upon Señor Limantour began to appear in various newspapers. These anonymous slanders became more and more personal and bitter. It was evident that some mind was directing a systematic and malignant attempt to discredit the man who had been chosen by the President as his successor.

A Reyes movement had sprung up, but General Reyes had given his word to support the President in his desire to see Señor Limantour succeed to the presidency. Diaz refused to believe that so gallant a soldier could be guilty of such treachery. The President was deeply distressed. Señor Limantour had rendered supremely great services to his country, and it was a public calamity that he should be discredited in the eyes of the ignorant masses. Efforts were made to discover the source of these attacks, but in vain. The secret was well guarded,



DON JOSÉ YVES LIMANTOUR, MEXICO'S GREAT SECRETARY OF  
FINANCE.

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the office of Vice President. In the teeth of these facts Diaz gave up his cherished plan for rest, agreed to stand again for the presidency, and openly frowned on the Reyes movement, which collapsed after a few riotous incidents. Reyes himself was not held to a too strict responsibility for the bombastic revolutionary utterances of his followers and associates, nor for the campaign of vilification which they started in the United States. The President sent him on a foreign mission to gather military information. The would-be revolutionists who had carried on their propaganda under his name loudly complained that their leader and hero had been exiled.

Even then President Diaz would have retired could he have persuaded Señor Limantour to succeed him.

The next president of Mexico will probably be Vice President Ramon Corral. This vigorous and intelligent statesman, who is also Secretary of the Interior, does not owe his right of succession to the presidency to the interference of Diaz, but rather to his own keen political ability and activity. He is a power in Sonora and the Northwest, as well as in the capital. He was a miner, then a journalist and soldier. In time he was elected governor of Sonora. Then he became governor of the Federal District. In 1904 he was elected Vice President of Mexico. Señor Corral has strong friends and bitter enemies. As Secretary of the Interior he has done much to aid President Diaz in adjusting the relations of the states to the national government, and, in spite of much abuse, he has won the confidence of Mexican business men. His election as Vice President in 1904, and again in 1910, shows the increasing freedom of political events in the republic, for nothing is more easily demonstrable than that President Diaz consented to this choice of a successor simply because Señor Corral had shown him-

## WILL THE REPUBLIC STAND?

self to be politically stronger than any of his rivals for the vice presidency.

There are those who insist that when President Diaz dies there will come a general and destructive upheaval in Mexico. They argue that it is his strength and skill and the hold which he has on the confidence of the Mexican people that preserves the peace in the republic, and that as soon as he passes away the nation will be thrown into widespread conditions of confusion and conflict.

The trouble with this alarming theory is that it is usually advanced by agitators who have denounced Diaz as a military despot, and who, at the same time, in their desire to make the future look black, declare that the people have confidence in him, but will trust no one else with such power as he has wielded.

In his white old age the master of Mexico has deeply studied the future of his country. It has been his constant thought. He has made his life a bridge through which his people have passed from chaos, poverty, and degradation into peace and stability. Looking to the days that are to come, he has drawn into the support of the government elements which were at war for half a century. Although the letter of the law grinds cruelly in its details on the Church, the policy of executing it has been one of humane consideration. One finds Archbishop Gillow, of Oaxaca, and other prelates praising the President for doing the best he can to protect the Church in peacefully prosecuting its religious work. Yet no one is sterner in his determination to keep ecclesiastics from intruding again into the politics of the republic. The brilliant and progressive governor of the Federal District is Don Guillermo Lauda, a devoted churchman and representative of one of the richest and most intense Catholic families in Mexico. Although Diaz helped to



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break the ecclesiastical tyranny in the country, he has encouraged the old Catholic aristocracy to assist in making the republic a means through which all races and religions may work peacefully for the general uplift and security. He has said that no nation can succeed without religion, but he insists that the activities of the priest shall be confined to the religious and moral domain of the Church and not be entangled with politics and government. He is not an enemy of religion, but a determined opponent of church interference in secular affairs. When a Mexican census taker asked him what his religion was, he said:

“I, Porfirio Diaz, as a private citizen, profess the faith of my parents, Roman Catholic Apostolic; but I, Porfirio Diaz, President of the United Mexican States, do not profess any faith, as I am not permitted by the Constitution to do so.”

So intelligently has he attracted the leading church families either to serve the republic or to support it, that it is wholly improbable, quite aside from the restrictions of the Constitution, that Mexico will ever again be divided in arms on the church question. There are about 4,000 Catholic churches in the states and territories of Mexico, with more than 6,000 priests and 7,000,000 active members, of whom some 3,000,000 are children. No one interferes, and no one thinks of interfering, with their freedom of worship.

With the old specter of armed ecclesiasticism laid in its grave, it is preposterous to talk about a reversion of the Mexican people to the old revolutionary habit. Diaz has done his work well. He has held his countrymen still, by harshness and force when necessary, until the 15,000 miles of railways, the 20,000 miles of telegraphs

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and telephones, the \$454,910,775 of annual foreign commerce, the \$160,232,876 of yearly mining products, the immense growth of manufactures and of agriculture representing hundreds of millions of dollars of Mexican and foreign capital, the great chain of solvent banks, the 12,599 schools, with their 15,000 professors and teachers, and all the thousand productive results of continued peace, have made civil war unattractive to any important or numerous part of the nation.

The Mexican people are too busy to fight each other now. They know that the influence of the railways alone has not only made commerce and industry possible, but that the wages of agricultural labor have practically doubled since Diaz gave the signal for a general railway development in the republic. They also know that even the humblest business man can borrow money at rates undreamed of in the old days of imaginative democracy and anarchy. Life and property are safe. The poorest peon understands that what he can earn he can keep. The vast system of hospitals, asylums, libraries, museums, and schools daily preach the gospel of peace.

Not only are there colleges in the various states, but in the Federal District are to be found doors of opportunity opened in the National Preparatory College, the National College of Jurisprudence, the National Medical College, the National School of Engineers, the National College of Agriculture and Veterinary Surgery, the High School of Commerce and Administration, the National School of Fine Arts, the National Conservatory of Music and Declamation, the National School of Arts and Trades for Men, the School of Arts and Trades for Girls, the Normal College for Men, the Normal College for Women, and other important institutions.

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There is great poverty in the republic, and that in itself has been held up as a reproach to the policy of the government; a \$10,000,000 national opera house in the beautiful capital of Mexico; but it would be unfair to condemn this criticism without also taking into account the magnificent general hospital and other humane institutions established in Mexico City and its suburbs before the opera house was even thought of.

The Belem prison, which is the general jail of detention in the capital, is unspeakably filthy, crowded, and often infected with disease. It is an open shame to the authorities. However, the penitentiary of the Federal District is perhaps the most perfect and well-managed institution of its kind in the world. The horrors of the Belem jail are a survival of Mexico's dark days; still, the government has planned a commodious modern structure to take the place of the old convent which has served so long as an example of Mexican misrule.

It is undeniable that President Diaz has the power of an autocrat; but that power grew out of the necessities of the Mexican nation. His rule has not been always government by the people, but it has invariably been government for the people. He has made the executive authority supreme and practically irresistible in what is theoretically a government of balanced powers, and his astonishing prestige and popularity, both as soldier and statesman, have converted popular elections into virtual ratifications of his known opinions and wishes. Yet even his bitterest foes have not suggested that he has shown the faintest inclination to bring about a hereditary perpetuation of his rule. His son, Colonel Porfirio Diaz, Jr., an able and successful engineer-architect, earns his income as a private citizen, and has not been encouraged to seek political promotion; and his charming wife and

## WILL THE REPUBLIC STAND?

daughters are among the most retiring of Mexican women. He has had to govern sometimes by sheer strength, but he has really governed—and he is still a comparatively poor man; and he has kept the Constitution unchanged for the future, when the Mexican people will be ready for the heavy burdens of individual responsibility which it confers.

In the great hymn of victory which burst from the lips of the republic and its friends in the celebration of the centennial anniversary of Mexican independence in 1910, President Diaz was the subject of many eulogies, but none of them compared with the tribute paid to him two years before by Elihu Root, the Secretary of State of the United States, when he said:

“It has seemed to me that of all the men now living, General Porfirio Diaz, of Mexico, was best worth seeing. Whether one considers the adventurous, daring, chivalric incidents of his early career; whether one considers the vast work of government which his wisdom and courage and commanding character accomplished; whether one considers his singularly attractive personality, no one lives to-day that I would rather see than President Diaz. If I were a poet, I would write poetic eulogies. If I were a musician, I would write triumphal marches. If I were a Mexican, I should feel that the steadfast loyalty of a lifetime could not be too much in return for the blessings that he had brought to my country. As I am neither poet nor Mexican, but only an American who loves justice and liberty, and hopes to see their reign among mankind progress and strengthen and become perpetual, I look to Porfirio Diaz, the President of Mexico, as one of the great men to be held up for the hero-worship of mankind.”

In the light of such a life it is not surprising that President Taft broke all precedents in 1909 by crossing

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the Mexican frontier to shake hands with the greatest man of the American continent, whom President Roosevelt described as "the greatest statesman now living"; nor is it matter for wonder that Mexico was the only Latin-American nation invited to take part in the famous international Hague conference for the conservation of the peace of the world; or that the republic, under the direction of President Diaz, maintains such admirable relations with other nations that it has not been found necessary to build up a Mexican navy.

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Many great nations have hung their decorations on his breast, beside the medals won on Mexican battlefields. Statesmen and authors in all countries have praised his work. Emperors, kings, and presidents have paid open tribute to his strength and wisdom. His country hums with the new life awakened by his courage and energy. But as he paces the terrace of Chapultepec Castle, high above the ancient rock and the towering cypresses that once knew Montezuma and his blood-stained priests, there can be no simpler, no manlier figure than the white-haired President.

Looking out from the flowery steeps at his feet over the wonderful valley within whose ring of mountains the stately Mexican capital stands in sight of snow-crowned, dead volcanoes—eloquent of Mexico's distant, troubled past—across the old, thrilling scenes of beauty in which so many heroes, martyrs, traitors, and buffoons have played their parts, he sums up his knowledge of mankind in a few words:





GENERAL DIAZ WHEN HE BECAME PRESIDENT FOR THE SECOND  
TIME, IN 1884.

## WILL THE REPUBLIC STAND?

“Men are much the same all over the world, and nations are like men. They must be carefully studied and their motives understood. A just government is nothing more than the collective ambitions of a people expressed in practical form. True statecraft is a study of the individual man. It is the same everywhere. The individual always has a personal motive in supporting his government. The ambition may be good or otherwise, but, at the bottom, it is personal. The beginning of real government is the discovery of what that motive really is, and statesmanship should seek, not to defeat, but to regulate, the gratification of individual ambition. It has been my aim to do that in dealing with my countrymen, who are a gentle, affectionate, and grateful people, following their hearts oftener than their heads. I have tried to know what the individual wants and expects. Even in his worship of God a man looks for some return, and how can human society expect to find anything higher in its members? Experience has taught me that progressive government should try to gratify individual ambition as much as possible, but that it must provide an extinguisher to be used when individual ambition burns too fiercely for the general good.

“Mexico was once without a middle class, but she has one now. The middle class is always the active element of society. The rich are too much devoted to their possessions and their social rank to help much in the general progress, and their children make little effort to improve themselves. The very poor, as a rule, are too ignorant to exert power. A democracy must be worked out by the middle class, drawn largely from the poor, but somewhat from the rich, the energetic, striving, self-improving middle class, which sincerely takes an interest in politics and the general welfare.

“~~It is a great comfort to me in my old age to feel~~ that the future of Mexico is secure at last.





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